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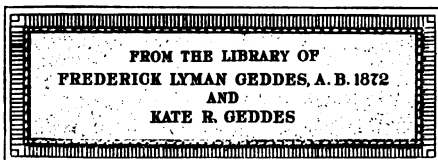
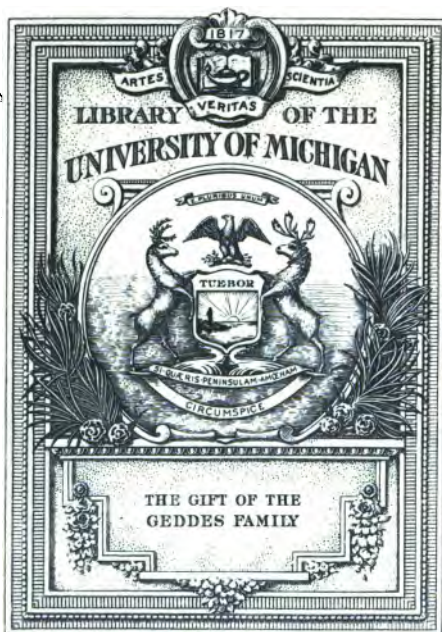
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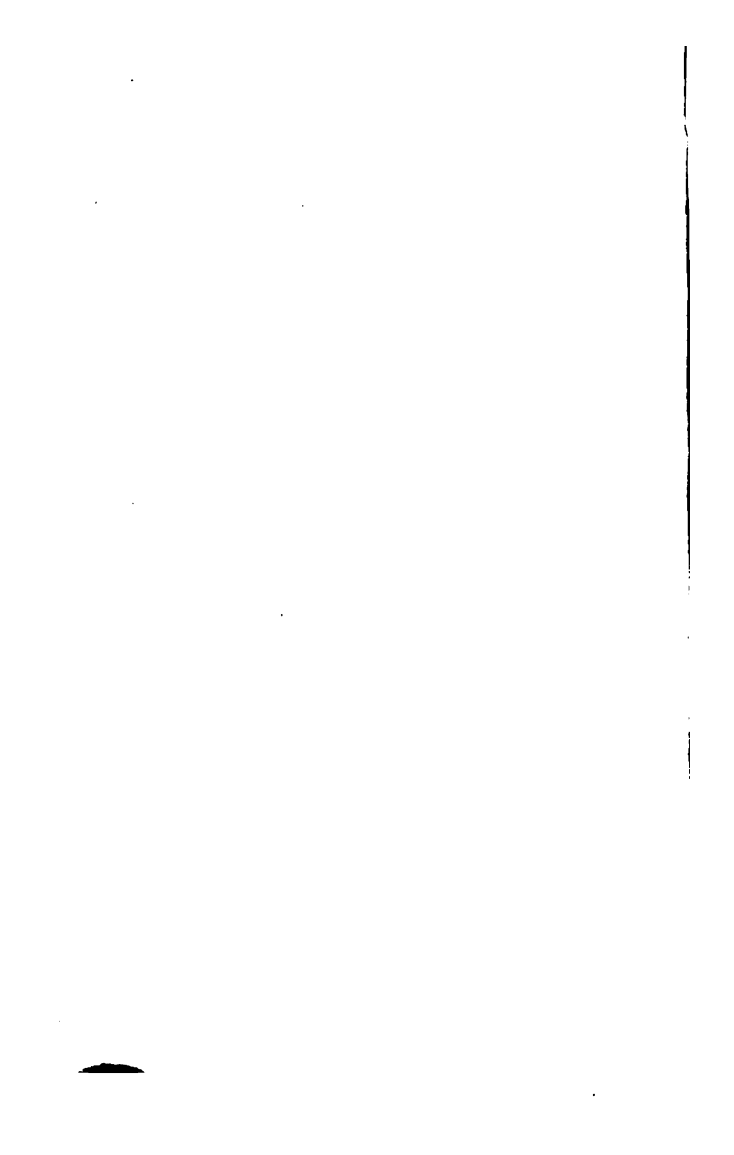
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822,
1342

BUILDING
SEE ONE





THE
GAMESTERS.

A
COMEDY,
AS ALTERED FROM
SHIRLEY AND C. JOHNSON.

ADAPTED FOR
THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,
AS PERFORMED AT THE
THEATRES-ROYAL,
DRURY-LANE AND COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS,
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"The Lines distinguished by inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation."

LONDON:

Printed for the Proprietors, under the Direction of
JOHN BELL, British-Library, STRAND,
Bookseller to His Royal Highness the PRINCE OF WALES.

M DCC XCII.

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5

Gift
Edwards Family
4-30-32

THE GAMESTERS.

THIS Comedy is an alteration from SHIRLEY and C. JOHNSON by GARRICK. It is a busy Play, and contains that sort of involved incident, without which the finest dialogue and the purest sentiment is but thrown away upon an audience.

The Critics have been divided touching the propriety of certain alterations in the present piece. The moderate opinion seems to be, that, from the pruning hand of our great Master of stage effect, it acts better, but that something is subducted from the pleasure of the closet perusal, given by the original.

It has unquestionably scenes of considerable smartness, and incidents that interest very divertingly; but yet the language is generally rugged—it is an antique, but the original die was never of the purest execution.

PROLOGUE.

Written and spoken by Mr. GARRICK.

*WHENE'ER the wits of France take pen in hand,
To give a sketch of you, and this our land;
One settled maxim through the whole you see——
To wit—their great superiority!
Urge what you will, they still have this to say,
That you who ape them, are less wise than they.
'Tis thus these well-bred letter-writers use us;
They trip o'er here; with half an eye peruse us;
Embrace us, eat our meat, and then—abuse us.
When this same play was writ, that's now before ye,
The English stage had reach'd its point of glory!
No paltry thefts disgrac'd this author's pen,
He painted English manners, English men;
And form'd his taste on Shakspeare and old Ben.
Then were French farces, fashions, quite unknown;
Our wits wrote well, and all they writ their own:
These were the times when no infatuation,
No vicious modes, no zeal for imitation,
Had chang'd, deform'd, and sunk the British nation.
Should you be ever from yourselves estrang'd,
The cock will crow, to see the lion chang'd!*

*To boast our liberty is weak and vain,
While tyrant vices in our bosoms reign;
Not liberty alone a nation saves;
Corrupted freemen are the worst of slaves.
Let Prussia's sons each English breast inflame;
O be our spirit, as our cause, the same!
And as our hearts with one religion glow,
Let us with all their ardours drive the foe,
As Heav'n had rais'd our arm, as Heav'n had given the
blow!*

*Would you rekindle all your ancient fires?
Extinguish first your modern, vain desires:
Still it is yours, your glories to retrieve;
Lop but the branches, and the tree shall live:
With these erect a pile for sacrifice!
And in the midst—throw all your cards and dice!
Then fire the heap; and as it sinks to earth
The British genius shall have second birth!
Shall, phoenix-like, rise perfect from the flame,
Spring from the dust, and mount again to fame!*

Dramatis Personae.

COVENT-GARDEN.

Men.

WILDING,	-	-	-	-	Mr. King.
HAZARD,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Farren.
ACRELESS,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Egan.
LITTLESTOCK,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Macready.
SELLAWAY,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Davies.
BARNACLE,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Quick.
Nephew,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Edwin.
DWINDLE,	-	-	-	-	Mr. C. Powell.
Page,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Simmons.
Box-keeper,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Rock.
Servant,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Farley.
CARELESS,	-	-	-	-	-
Drawer,	-	-	-	-	Mr. Ledger.

Women.

Mrs. WILDING,	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Pope.
PENELOPE,	-	-	-	-	Mrs. Merry.



THE GAMESTERS.

ACT I. SCENE I.

Enter WILDING and PENELOPE.

Wilding.

WHAT need you be so coy now ?

Pen. Pray collect

Yourself ; remember what you are, and whose :
You have a virtuous gentlewoman ; think
Upon your faith to her.

Wild. Think of a fiddle-stick !

While you put me in mind of what I am,
You quite forget yourself. My wife, I allow,
Your kinswoman far off ; to whom, a widow,
Your father left you, with a handsome fortune ;
Which, by her marriage, I have in possession,
And you too : therefore, as you hope to be
In due time worth a husband, think upon't.
I can deserve respect ; then wisely use me,
As you would keep me.

Pen. 'This is but a trial

Of my strength; for I know you have more charity,
(Should I consent) than shipwreck your own honour.
But take heed, sir, how you proceed to jest
With frailty; lest too much disordering
Your good thoughts, you forget, and by degrees
Lose your own innocence.

Wild. I jest! you'd have me swear;
And yet you ~~should not think~~ it such a wonder
To love, sure. Come, shake of this frost; it spoils
thee;

Your nature should be soft and flexible.
Perhaps, thou think'st—I do not love thee heartily:
I know not how to give thee better testimony,
Than by offering myself to thee: if my wife die,
(As ten to one she's not immortal) we
May couple t'other way.

Pen. What argument is this
To assure the truth of your affection to me,
That break your vows to her?

Wild. Oh! great argument,
An' you observe: she was a widow when
I marry'd her; thou'rt a young maid, and handsome,

Pen. Can you be so ungrateful, then, to punish
Whom you should reward? Remember, sir, she
brought you

That wealth you have; took you from nothing——

Wild. There's reason then for nothing I should love
her.

Hang her estate! I was held a proper man;
And in that point deserv'd her, an' she had millions:

An' I were free again, I would not draw
I' th' team of marriage, for ten subsidies ;
Not to command a province.

Pen. Yet, you said,
Were your wife dead, you'd marry me.

Wild. Only thee, and nobody else.

Pen. 'Twere dangerous to have many.

Wild. To have one is little less than madness. Come,
wo't promise ?

Enter Mrs. WILDING, behind.

Pen. What ?

Wild. A'course you know my meaning.

Mrs. Wild. I do not like this whispering : why with
her

So close in parley ?

Wild. Wo't thou do this feat for me ?

'Tis finish'd in a pair of minutes.

Pen. Yes, upon one condition.

Wild. What condition ?

Pen. That your wife give consent ; you shall then
command me. *[Exit.*

Wild. I'll undertake to go a pilgrimage
To Jerusalem, and return sooner. Would
I did not love thee, love thee infinitely——
That's all ; 'two'not do——My wife ! I hope
She has not eaves-dropp'd us. What pity 'tis
She cannot find the way to heav'n. I should not
Trouble her in haste. These wives will have no con-
science,

But stick to us everlastingly. Now, lady,
How did your monkey rest last night ? you look
As you had not said your prayers yet ; I won't disturb
you.

Mrs. Wild. Pray, sir, stay ; let me but know
Some reason, why you use me thus unkindly ?
If I have been guilty of offence, I am not
Past hope, but with the knowledge of my error
'Tis possible I may amend and please you.

Wild. I do not like you.

Mrs. Wild. You did marry me.

Wild. Yes, I did marry you ; here's too much record for't.

I would there were a parson to unmarry us !
If any of our clergy had that faculty,
He might repair the old, and build as many
New abbeys through the kingdom, in a twelvemonth.
Shall I speak truth ? I never much affected thee ;
I marry'd thee for thy soul's sake, not thy body :
Yet I do not hate thee. Witness, I dare kiss ;
Hold thee by the hand, sleep in the same house,
Nay, in the same bed sometimes ; but——

Mrs. Wild. What, sir ?

Wild. You have a scurvy quality, wife ; I told you
on't.

Mrs. Wild. Once more ; and I'll correct it.

Wild. You are given to be jealous. I cannot
Ramble abroad in gentlemen's company
Whole days, lie out a nights, but you suspect
I am wanton. 'Tis ill done ; it becomes no modest

Woman that loves her husband, to be jealous,
Whate'er she sees or hears; mend, mend this fault,
You do not know how it may work upon me.
Some wives will bid their husband's leverets welcome;
Nay, keep house together; but you ne'er did it:
Know their own chamber, and not come forth
Till they be sent for. These morals I have read
Before now, but you put them not in practice;
Nor, for aught I perceive, have disposition to't.
Therefore I'll take my course.

Mrs. Wild. To shew I can
Be obedient to my griefs; from this time, sir,
I wo't not urge with one unwelcome syllable
How much I am neglected; I'll conceal it
Too from the world: your shame must needs be mine.
I see you do not love me; where your heart
Hath plac'd a worthier thought, let it dwell ever;
Freely pursue your pleasures; I will have
No passion that shall mutiny; you are,
And shall be lord of me still.

Wild. I like this, if it be no disguise.

Mrs. Wild. Do not suspect me;
I would swear by a kiss, if you'd vouchsafe it;
You shall not keep a servant that shall be more humble.

Wild. And obedient to my will?

Mrs. Wild. In all things.

Wild. I'll try you then.

[*Aside.*]

But if I bring home a mistress——

Mrs. Wild. I'll be patient.

Wild. What if there be one
Already that does please me ? will you not
Repine, and look awry upon's, when we
Make much of one another ?

Mrs. Wild. So you will but sometimes smile on me
too, I'll endeavour.

Wild. Well said : this may do good upon me ; as
I find you prompt in this, I may consider
Other matters : to tell you true, I like
Your kinswoman.

Mrs. Wild. How !

Wild. How ? why as a man should like her ; but
I find her cold and peevish. How she may
Be brought about, I know not. 'Twould shew well,
And be a precedent for other wives,
If you would put your help to't.

Mrs. Wild. Goodness bless me !

Wild. One woman with another can do more,
In such a cause, than twenty men. I do not
Wander, you see, out of the blood ; this will
Be a way to justify your obedience.

Mrs. Wild. You shew a tyrant now ; and, stead of
framing
My soul to patience, murder both.

Wild. Nay, nay, child, if you are out of humour at
trifles, I must leave you. [Going.]

Mrs. Wild. Stay, sir :

Wild. Not now, my dear—when you are cool again
you may expect me. [Exit singing.]

Mrs. Wild. This is not to be borne; my patience is worn out; and, one way or other, I must have some respite to my tortures. [Exit.]

SCENE II.

The Street. Enter WILDING.

Wild. I have gone too far, a conscience—this may spoil all; and, now I think upon it, I was a coxcomb to discover any party. I must deny it again, and carry things more closely. But, let me see, why do I use this wife of mine thus terribly? She gave me all—ay, that all's the devil! my desires are satisfied, and I have not a grain of inclination left; variety is the thing—in eating, music, wine, or women; nothing but variety gives the palate to them all: now, my wife is always the same tune, the same dish, the same dull bottle of port; and, to sum up all, the same woman—'twill never do. How now, Will?

Enter HAZARD.

Haz. How now, Will! is that all?
Look up, and ask me a question like a man;
What, melancholy?

Wild. No, no; a toy, a trifle.

Haz. That should be a woman; who is't thou art
thinking on?
I have been of your counsel—

B

Wild. I was thinking—o' my wife.

We have had a dialogue; come, thou know'st my bosom.

Haz. When dost mean to use her well?

Wild. I know not; but I have offer'd fair conditions.

She is very confident I do not dote
Upon her beauty: I have told her, sirrah,
I love her kinswoman.

Haz. Y'are not mad?

Wild. The world's deceiv'd in her; she'll give me leave

To ramble where I list; and feed upon
What best delights my appetite.

Haz. He that has
An ambition to be strangled in his sleep,
May tell his wife he loves another woman.

Wild. But I was not content with this. Because
The other wench was somewhat obstinate,
I must needs urge my wife to mollify
And mold her for my purpose.

Haz. And she consented?

Wild. No, 'twould not do:
This went again her stomach, and we parted.

Haz. Next time you see her, look to be presented
With your mistress' nose for this. Dost think a woman
Can be so patient, to know her rival
I' th' same roof, and leave her eyes to see thee
Again? I am sorry for thee.

Wild. I am confident

She dare not: but for all that, would I had
Been less particular.

Haz. Come, I love thee well;
But not thy wit, to carry things no handsomer:
You must unravel again, and make your wife
Believe you did but try her.

Wild. Pr'ythee drop the subject; don't set my
teeth on edge with talking so much about my wife.
Canst not see by my wry faces, that 'tis holding the
phial to my nose, after I have taken the physic. Pr'y-
thee no more of her. Now tell me, what brought thee
this way?

Haz. I was going to meet old Barnacle.

Wild. Barnacle! what can such opposites possibly
do together? He wants you to beat somebody for
him.

Haz. Faith, Jack, I have no superfluous valour to
dispose of—I have just enough to defend myself
from the impertinence of some, and the villany of
others.

Wild. A gamester by profession, Will, should be
always ready to draw his sword, as the circumstances
of play and the support of his honour may require it.

Haz. Yes, there are gamesters who are ever draw-
ing their swords to support their honour, and of con-
sequence are for ever fighting.

Wild. And they find their account in't: for gentle-
men in general had much rather submit to have their
pockets picked, than run the risque of having their
throats cut: but, pr'ythee, Hazard, how do you es-

cape these fire-drakes; for you are pretty open and direct in your censures upon 'em.

Haz. What will they get by quarrelling with me? they know I dare fight, and that I hate a scoundrel; and whenever madam Fortune is pleased to jilt, and strip me, I always fall upon her bullies; and as they don't love fighting for fighting sake, they call me an odd fellow, and let me alone.

Wild. Ha, ha, ha! but to return to Barnacle——What is become of that genius his nephew?

Haz. Just now returned from college, as great a genius as he went——He has been exposing himself those two years at the university, in the characters of the rake and the scholar, and now is come up to make the same figure in town.

Wild. Is he not an insufferable blockhead?

Haz. Yes, an insufferable blockhead; but not absolutely ignorant. His tutor has got words into him without ideas; so his folly and scholarship set one another off to a most ridiculous advantage.

Wild. What Greek and Latin he has, I suppose, lies in his head, as his uncle's money does in the chest, without being of the least use to himself, or any body else.

Haz. You are mistaken, sir; his uncle will spare no expence to make his hopeful kinsman a fine gentleman.

Wild. Then the matter is out——He comes to bind him apprentice to you.

Haz. Your humble servant.

Wild. His debauchery will become him as little as his learning; so that in time we shall see the hopeful youth not only contemptible but infamous.

Haz. Is not that the old gentleman yonder, coming this way?

Wild. It is, indeed; and therefore I shall leave you to your entertainment. Squeeze a few hundreds out of him if you can—I must back to my kinswoman—I can't rest without her—Shall I see you at the old place this afternoon? [Exit.

Haz. You shall—I wish I could get this Penelope out of his hands. She's a charming girl, and, though she has not quite money enough to be made a wife of by one of no fortune, yet she has too many good qualities to be made a strumpet of by such a fellow as Wilding—He will not succeed, surely—What should be the business, that old Barnacle has desired my conference? 'tis not to lend me money sure—He's here.

Enter BARNACLE.

Barn. Master Hazard!

Haz. I was coming to you, sir.

Barn. I am fortunate to prevent so great a trouble; There is a business, sir, wherein I must desire your favour.

Haz. Mine? command it, sir.

Barn. Nay, I'll be thankful too; [*Shewing a purse of money.*] I know you are
A gentleman.

Haz. That should incline you to think
I am not mercenary.

Barn. I beseech you, sir,
Mistake me not; rewards are due to virtues,
And honour must be cherished.

Haz. What's your purpose?
Pray clear my understanding.

Barn. To be plain, sir,
You have a name i' th' town for a brave fellow.

Haz. How, sir! you do not come to jeer me?

Barn. Patience, I mean you have the opinion
Of a valiant gentleman; one that dares
Fight and maintain your honour against odds.
The sword-men do acknowledge you; the bailiffs
Observe their distance; all the swaggering puffs
Strike their top-sails. I have heard them in the streets
Say—There goes daring Hazard; a man careless
Of wounds; and though he has not had the luck
To kill so many as another, dares
Fight with all them that have.

Haz. You have heard this?

Barn. And more, and more; mistake not,
I do not all this while account you in
The list of those are called the blades, that roar
In brothels, and break windows, that swear dammees,
“To pay their debts; and march like walking ar-
mories,
“With poniard, pistol, rapier, and battoon,”
As they would murder all the king's liege people,
And blow down streets: no, I repute you valiant

Indeed, and honoured ; and come now, without
More ceremony, to desire your favour ;
Which, as you are a gentleman, I hope
You'll not deny me.

Haz. Though your language
Be something strange, yet because I think you dare
not

Intend me an abuse, I do not question it.
Pray to the point ; I do not think you're come
To have me be your second.

Barn. I am no fighter ;
Though I have seen a fence-school in my days,
And cracked a cudgel ; yet I come about
A fighting business.

Haz. You would have me beat somebody for you.

Barn. Not so, noble Hazard : yet
I come to intreat a valiant courtesy,
Which I am willing to requite in money ;
I have brought gold to give you payment, sir ;
'Tis a thing you may easily consent to,
And 'twill oblige me ever.

Haz. Be particular.

Barn. Then thus ; you are not ignorant I have a
nephew, sir.

Haz. You have so.

Barn. One that's like
To be my heir ; the only one of my name
That's left : and one that may in time be made
A pretty fellow.

Haz. Very well ; proceed.

Barn. You know, or you imagine, that I have
A pretty estate too.

Haz. You're held a main rich man, sir ;
In money able to weigh down an alderman.

Barn. I have more than I shall spend, now I come
close ;
I would have this nephew of mine converse with gentlemen.

Haz. And he does so.

Barn. I'll not pinch him in's allowance ;
The University had almost spoiled him.

Haz. With what ?

Barn. With modesty ; a thing, you know,
Not here in fashion : but that's almost cured ;
I would allow him to be drunk——

Haz. You may, sir.

Barn. Or any thing, to speak him a gentleman.

Haz. With your favour, sir, let me be bold a little
To interrupt you ; were not you a citizen ?

Barn. 'Tis confessed, sir.

Haz. It being a thriving way,
A walk wherein you might direct your nephew,
Why d'ye not breed him so ?

Barn. I apprehend ;
And thus I satisfy you : we that had
Our breeding from a trade, cits as you call us,
Though we hate gentlemen ourselves, yet are
Ambitious to make all our children gentlemen :
In three generations they return again ;
We for our children purchase land ; they brave it

I' th' country, beget children, and they sell ;
 Grow poor, and send their sons up to be 'prentices :
 There is a whirl in fate. The courtiers make
 Us cuckolds ; mark, we wriggle into their
 Estates ; poverty makes their children citizens,
 Our sons cuckold them. A circular justice !
 The world turns round. But once more to the purpose.

Haz. To your nephew.

Barn. This nephew of mine I do love dearly ;
 He is all my care ; I would be loth to lose him ;
 And to preserve him both in life and honour
 I come to you.

Haz. Now you come to me indeed, sir.

Barn. What shall I give you, sir, to let him——

Haz. What ?

Barn. Pray, be not angry.

Haz. By no means.

Barn. There is no such security i' th' world ;
 I'll pay for't heartily.

Haz. For what ?

Barn. What shall I give you, troth, and let him——

Haz. What ?

Barn. Beat you, sir.

Haz. How ?

Barn. Nay, do not, sir, mistake me : for although
 I name it coarsely, I desire it should be
 With your consent, not otherwise : my nephew
 Is raw, and wants opinion ; and the talk
 Of such a thing, to have beat a gentleman

That all the town's afraid of, would be worth
In's credit, heaven knows what ! Alas, you cannot
Blame a kind uncle, to desire all means
To get his nephew fame, and keep him safe ;
And this were such a way !

Haz. To have me beaten.

Barn. You're i' th' right ; but do not misconceive
me.

Under your favour, my intention is not
He should much hurt you : if you please to let him
Quarrel, or so, at tavern, or where else
You shall think fit ; and throw a pottle-pot——

Haz. At my head ?

Barn. Yes, or a bottle ; still under your correction ;
Only that some of your acquaintance, and
Gentlemen may take notice, that he dares
Affront you, and come off with honour handsomely.
Look, here's a hundred pieces ! tell 'em i' th' ordi-
nary ;

They're weight, upon my credit : play 'em not
Against light gold : this is the prologue to
My thanks ; besides my nephew shall in private
Acknowledge himself beholden.

Haz. A hundred pieces ! I want money.

Barn. Right.

Haz. You give me this to let your nephew beat me ?

Barn. Pray, take me with ye ; I do not mean he
should

By beating hurt you dangerously. You may
Contrive the quarrel, so that he may draw

Some blood ; or knock you o'er the pate, and so forth ;
And come off bravely : this is all.

Haz. Well, sir ;

You do not mean, you say, he should endanger
My life or limbs ; all you desire, if I
Mistake not, is to get your nephew credit ;
That being fleshed, he may walk securely, and be held
Valiant, by gaining honour upon me.

Barn. You understand me right.

Haz. I'll put it up ;

Pray send your nephew to me ; we'll agree.

Barn. Agree, 'sir ? You must quarrel, and he must
beat you,

Else 'tis no bargain.

Haz. Not before

We have concluded how things shall be carried.

Barn. I must desire your secrecy, and——

Haz. Here's my hand.

Barn. And there's my money.

Haz. Your nephew shall be a blade.

Barn. Why there's ten pieces more, 'cause you
come off

So freely ; I'll send him to you.

Haz. Do so ; why this, if the dice favour me, may
bring all

My lands again. Be sure you send him ; but

No words ! for your nephew's credit.

Barn. Mum—I thank you heartily. [Exit.

Haz. Be there such things i' th' world ? I'll first to
the tavern ;

There I am staid for : gentlemen, I come ;
I'll be beat every day for such a sum.

[Exit.

ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter Mrs. WILDING and the Page.

Mrs. Wilding.

WHERE'S your master, boy ?

Page. I know not, mistress.

Mrs. Wild. Come nearer, sirrah ; you are of your
master's

Council sometimes. Come, be true in what
I shall desire, and I shall find a time for your reward.

Page. How d'ye mean, mistress ?

We pages meet rewards of several natures :
This great man gives us gold, that lady gloves,
T'other silk stockings, roses, garters : but
The lady and mistress whom we serve in ordinary,
Reserves another bounty for our closeness.

Mrs. Wild. I see you can be a wag ; be but just to
me, and secret——

Page. As your looking-glass,
That in your absence cannot be corrupted
To betray your complexion.

Mrs. Wild. What private mistresses does Master
Wilding visit ?

Page. Who, my master ?

Alas, forsooth ! d'ye think he lets me know ?

Mrs. Wild. Nay, nay, dissemble not.

Page. I hire a coach

Sometimes or so, but ride always i' the boot :

I look at nobody but the passengers.

I do not sit i' the same box at plays with them.

I wait at tavern, I confess, and so forth ;

And when he has supp'd, we must have time to eat too ;

And what should I trouble my conscience

With being too officious till I am call'd for ?

'Tis true, he waits upon the ladies home ;

But 'tis so dark, I know not where they dwell ;

And the next day we have new ones, 'las ! mere
strangers

To me, and I should be unmannerly

To catechize them. If now and then there be

Any superfluous, cast waiting-woman,

There be so many serving-men about her,

I cannot come to ask a question ;

And how should I know any thing ?

Mrs. Wild. I see you are old enough for vice.

Page. Alas, forsooth !

You know 'tis ill to do a thing that's wicked,

But 'twere a double sin to talk on't too,

If I were guilty ; beside, forsooth, I know

You would ne'er trust me again, if I should tell you.

Mrs. Wild. Thou art deceiv'd, it shall endear thee
more.

Page. I must beseech you

To be excus'd. My master is my master ;

My foot are at your service, not my tongue :

I would not forfeit my honour for the world.

Mrs. Wild. Hence, thou old in villany!
But 'tis in vain to chide. Leave me, and bid
Mistress Penelope come hither.

Page. Yes, forsooth—She is so frumpish. [*Exit.*]

Mrs. Wild. I know not which way to begin. To me
He has betray'd he loves her. Here she is;
Now to the trial.

Enter PENELOPE.

Pen. Will you be sad still, cousin? Why d'ye
grieve?

Be kinder to yourself. Trust me, I weep,
When I am alone, for you.

Mrs. Wild. Sorrow and I
Are taking leave, I hope; and these are only
Some drops after the cloud has wept its violence.
Were one thing finish'd, I should ne'er be sad more;
And I cannot despair to know it done,
Since the effect depends upon your love.

Pen. My love! 'Tis justice you command my service.

I would I were so happy.

Mrs. Wild. Make me so,
By your consent to my desire.

Pen. Pray, name it.

Mrs. Wild. I only ask your love; pray, give it me.

Pen. My love! Why do you mock my poor heart,
which

Pours all it has upon you? You're possess'd of that
already.

Mrs. Wild. You examine not
The extent of my request ; for when you have
Given what I ask, your love, you must no more
Direct it as you please : the power's in me
How to dispose it.

Pen. And you shall for ever.
I have no passion that shall not know obedience to you.

Mrs. Wild. Your love, by gift
Made mine, I give my husband. Do you love him ?

Pen. I always did.

Mrs. Wild. But in a nearer way :
Love him as I do ?

Pen. I understand you not ; or if you do
Suspect I cherish any lawless flame——

Mrs. Wild. Thou art too innocent ; be less, and do
An act to endear us both. I know he loves thee ;
Meet it, dear coz ; 'tis all I beg of thee.
I know you think it a most strange request ;
But it will make me fortunate.

Pen. Grief, I fear,
Hath made her wild—D'ye know what you desire ?

Mrs. Wild. Yes, that you love my husband. “ Mo-
desty

“ Will not allow me to discourse my wish
“ In every circumstance.” But think how desperate
My wound is, that would have so strange a cure.
He'll love me then : and, trust me, I'll not study
Revenge, as other wives perhaps would do,
But thank thee : and indeed an act like this,

So full of love, with so much loss and shame too,
For mine and his sake, will deserve all duty.

Pen. I have no patience to hear more ; and could
I let in a thought you meant this earnest,
I should forget I knew you : but you cannot
Be fallen from so much goodness. I confess
I have no confidence in your husband's virtue ;
He has attempted me, but shall hope sooner
To leave a stain upon the sun, than bribe
Me to so foul a guilt. I have no life
Without my innocence ; and you cannot make
Yourself more miserable than to wish it from me.
Oh, do not lose the merit of your faith
And truth to him, tho' he forget himself,
By thinking to relieve yourself thus sinfully !
But sure you do but try me all this while.

Mrs. Wild. And I have found thee pure ; be still
preserv'd so.

But he will straggle farther——

Pen. Cherish hope,
He rather will come back. Your tears and prayers
Cannot be lost.

Mrs. Wild. I charge thee, by thy love,
Yet be rul'd by me. I'll not be so wicked
To tempt thee in a thought shall blemish thee :
But as thou wouldst desire my peace, and his
Conversion, if his wantonness last with him,
Appear more tractable ; allow him so much
Favour, in smile and language, that he may not
Think it impossible to prevail at last.

Pen. This may engage him farther, and myself to a dishonour.

Mrs. Wild. It shall work our happiness,
As I will manage things. 'Tis but to seem:
A look will cost thee nothing, nor a smile,
To make his hopes more pleasing. On my life,
Thou shalt be safe both in thy fame and person.
Will you do this for my sake?

Pen. I'll refuse no danger, if I suffer not in honour,
To do you any service.

Mrs. Wild. I have cast it
Already in my brain; but do not yet
Enquire my purpose. As his folly leads
Him to pursue you, let me know, and I'll
By fair degrees acquaint you with my plot,
Which, built on no foul ends, is like to prosper.
And see how aptly he presents himself—
Pr'ythee, seem kind, and leave the rest to me.
He shall not see me. [Exit.

Enter WILDING.

Wild. How now, coz? Was that
My wife went off?

Pen. Yes, sir.

Wild. Let her go. What said she to thee?

Pen. Nothing.

Wild. Thou art troubled!

Pen. Pray, to your knowledge, sir, wherein have I
Done injury to you or her?

Wild. Has she abus'd thee ?

I'll chastise her.

Pen. By no means, sir—I steal away your heart,
And meet at stol'n embraces.

Wild. Does she twit thee ? I'll kick her like a foot-
ball,

Say but the word.

Pen. By no means think upon't. I have forgiven her.
You sha' not, sir, so much as frown upon her ;
Pray, do not, as you love me. We must study
A more convenient revenge.

Wild. How is this ?

I pr'ythee, if she has been peremptory,
Which was none of our articles, let me instruct thee
How we shall be reveng'd.

Pen. Sir, I acknowledge
The growth and expectation of my fortune
Is in your love ; and tho' I would not wrong her—
And yet, to have my innocence accus'd,
Is able to pervert it. Sir, your pardon ;
I have been passionate. Pray, love your wife.

Wild. No, no, I'll love thee ; indeed, indeed, I will.
Is she jealous ?

Pen. You know she has no cause.

Wild. Let us be wise, and give her cause : shall's,
coz ?

Pen. Sir, if I be a trouble to your house,
Your breath shall soon discharge me. I had thought
The tie of blood might have gain'd some respect.

Wild. Discharge thee the house ! I'll discharge her,

And all her generation, thee excepted ;
And thou shalt do't thyself ; by this thou shalt.

[*Kisses her.*

Ha ! she comes to with more freedom : this is better
Than if my wife had pleaded for me. [*Aside.*] Pen,
Thou shalt be mistress, wilt thou ? Come, thou shalt :
She's fit for drudgery.

Pen. Oh, do not say so !

Wild. Then I wo' not. But I love thee for thy
spirit,

'Cause thou wilt be reveng'd. Punish her jealousy
The right way : when 'tis done, I would choose
To tell her : it may kick up her heels another way.

Pen. Tell her what ? You make me blush.

Wild. No, no, I'll tell nobody ; by this hand, I
will not. [*Kisses it.*] Stay, stay, I have a diamond will
become this finger : 'tis in my drawer above ; I'll
fetch it straight.

Pen. Oh, by no means !

Wild. 'Tis thine, 'tis thine, my girl ! my soul is
thine ! [*Exit.*

Pen. Indeed, Mrs. Wilding, this is going a little
too far for you—There is something so like reality
in all I have been doing, that I am more than half
in a fever with it already. This playing with fire is a
very foolish thing ; but, tho' I burn my fingers, I
must go thro' with it.

Enter WILDING, with a Ring.

Wild. Here it is, Pen, as sparkling as thyself.

Wear it, and let my wife stare out her eyes upon't.

Pen. I wo' not take't on such conditions.

Wild. Take it on any, take it on any—
She's come about.

[*Aside.*]

Enter Page.

Page. Sir, Master Hazard desires your company at the tavern: he says there are none but gentlemen of your acquaintance, Mr. Careless, Mr. Littlestock, and Mr. Sellaway.

Wild. He must excuse me—Get you gone.

Pen. Stay, stay, boy—As you love me, go, sir—Your master will come. [*Exit Page.*] Have no suspicions that I wish your absence. I'll wear your gift, and study to be grateful.

Wild. I'll leave my boy behind; and should my wife be set on gossiping this afternoon, pretend thou, girl, some slight indisposition to keep at home; and when she's gone, let me but know it, and I'll leave the happiest run of dice to catch a moment with thee.

Pen. I want not such strong proofs of your regard; I will not stop your fortune.

Wild. Then I'll not leave you now.

Pen. You must, indeed you must—When I can oblige you, I shall not prove ungrateful. [*Exit.*]

Wild. Both wind and tide are for me!—No talk now of wife's consent; I'll not remove my siege—When I can oblige you—Oh, 'twas sweetly spoken!

She is my own ! I have her sure, quite sure !—Now to the tavern, and drink to the purpose. [Exit.

SCENE II.

The Tavern. HAZARD, ACRELESS, LITTLESTOCK, SELLEWAY, and Drawer, discovered.

Haz. More wine.

Acr. Right, noble Hazard ; here's to thee.

Haz. Let it come, boy ; fill it me steeple high ; I am in the vein of mirth, and I ha' cause, as you shall see in due time, gentlemen. Mr. Littlestock, thou art dreaming o' the dice.

Sell. He's melancholy.

Litt. Who, I ?

Haz. I'll play the farrier, then, and drench thee for the sullens. A health to all our mistresses ; we have had them single, let's shuffle them now together. [Drinks.] Come, let us join a little music to our wine, and if his melancholy stands them both, I'll lay all the money in my pocket, which is no small sum, that he has a two-penny cord about him, and will make use of it before to-morrow morning. Come, Tom, I'll give you the gamester's apology, and if these are only qualms of conscience, this song will warm him like a dram.

SONG.

*Ye youths of this town,
Who roam up and down,
To eat and to dress all your aim ;
Be not squeamish or nice
To make friends of the dice,
All the world plays the best of the game.*

*See how each profession
And trade thro' the nation
Will dupe all they can without shame :
Then why should not we
In our turn be as free ?
All the world plays the best of the game.*

*The lawyers of note
Will squabble and quote,
And learnedly plead and declaim ;
Yet all is but trick
The poor client to nick,
For the law plays the best of the game.*

*To gain his base ends,
Each lover pretends
To talk of his darts and his flame,
By which he draws in
The poor maiden to sin,
Who is left with the worst of the game.*

*The prudish coy maid,
With hypocrisy's aid,
To foolish fond man does the same:
When the fool's in the net,
The prude turns coquette,
And her spouse has the worst of the game.*

*The patriots so loud,
Who roar to the crowd,
And mount to the summit of fame!
Their mouths soon will shut,
Then they shuffle and cut,
And at court play the best of the game.*

*The heroes so stout
At home make a rout,
And swear the proud foe they will tame;
But alter their tones
When they think of their bones,
And for them play the best of the game.*

*Then since the great plan
Is cheat as cheat can,
Pray, think not my notions to blame;
In country and town,
From courtier to clown,
All the world plays the best of the game.*

Sell. 'Tis joyous, faith!
Haz. I wonder Jack Wilding stays——He's come
in the nick.

Enter WILDING.

Wild. Save you, save you, gallants; may a man come i' the rear.

Haz. Give him his garnish.

Wild. Y'are not prisoners for the reckoning, I hope?

Haz. For the reckoning!—Now ye are all together, gentlemen, I'll shew you a wonder. But come not too near; keep out o' the circle. Whatsoever you think on't, this is an hundred pounds—Nay, not so close; these pictures do shew best at distance, gentlemen. You see it—*Presto.* [*Puts it up.*

Wild. Nay, let's see it again.

Haz. Like to your cunning juggler, I ne'er shew my trick but once. You may hear more hereafter. What think you of this, Mr. Acreless, Mr. Littlestock, and Mr. Sellaway?

Acr. We do not believe 'tis gold.

Haz. Perish then in your infidelity.

Wild. Let me but touch it.

Haz. It will endure, take my word for it. Look you, for your satisfactions—No gloves off—you have devices to defalck—Preserve your talons and your talents, till you meet with more convenient gamesters.

Litt. How cam'st by it?

Wild. Thou'dst little or none this morning.

Haz. I have bought it, gentlemen, and you, in a mist,

Shall see what I paid for it. Thou hast not drank yet,
Wilding :

Ne'er fear the reck'ning, man——More wine, you
varlets !

Wild. But hark thee, hark thee, Will, didst win it ?

Haz. No ; but I may lose it ere I go to bed.

Dost think't shall musty ? What's an hundred
pounds ?

Sell. A miracle ! But they are ceas'd with me.

Act. And me too. Come, let's drink.

Wild. No matter how it came, Will : I congratulate

Thy fortune, and will quit thee now with good
News of myself. My coz, I told thee of,
Is wheel'd about : she has took a ring of me.
We kiss'd and talk'd time out of mind.

Haz. I know it :

My almanack says 'tis a good day to woo in ;
Confirm'd by Erra Pater, that honest Jew, too.
I'll pledge thee.

Enter Drawer.

Draw. Mr. Hazard, there are two gentlemen below enquire for you ; and, Mr. Wilding, this note for you.

Wild. For me !

Haz. What kind of men are they ?

Draw. One's somewhat ancient ; I heard him call
The other nephew. [Exit,

Wild. *Vittoria! Vittoria!* Will, a summons from the island of love—my wife's absent, and Pen and I shall toy away an hour, without fear or molestation.

Haz. Have a care, Jack: I love pleasure as well as thou; but to obtain it at the expence of every virtue, is rather paying too dear for it.

Wild. What, a moralizing gamester! Ha, ha, ha! 'tis envy, Will, attacks thee in the shape of conscience; and was I like the foolish dog in the fable, to catch at the shadow, and drop my tit bit, thou wouldst be the first to snap it up.—But I have not time to laugh at thee—I must away—the wench calls, and I must fly. [*Exit.*

Haz. This affair perplexes me—How little do we know of women! had I had fortune enough to have ventured upon marriage, I would have fixed upon this cousin of his, preferable to the whole sex; but the devil is in them, and will peep out one time or other—I don't know why, but I am vexed at this affair—I'll never go to Wilding's house again.

Enter Drawer.

Draw. Mr. Hazard, the gentlemen without are impatient to see you. [*Exit.*

Haz. I beg their pardon, I had forgot them. I do caution you, gentlemen, beforehand, to be fair conditioned; one of them, the nephew, is of a fiery constitution, and sensible of any affront; let this character prepare him for you.

Acc. Bring him not hither.

Haz. There is a necessity in it; I would not for a hundred pound but entertain him, now he knows I am here. [Exit.

Sell. Why must we keep company with his disagreeable acquaintance?

Enter HAZARD again, with BARNACLE, his Nephew, and DWINDLE.

Act. This is old Barnacle.

Lit. And that's his nephew; I have been in his company.

Sell. Is this the youth Hazard prepared us for? How busy they are!

Haz. You could not wish better opportunity. These are all gentlemen of quality. I'll call him cousin first, if it please you, To endear him to their acquaintance.

Bar. I'll not be a witness of your passages myself: these will report as much as I desire. Sir, if you be beaten, I am satisfied,

Neph. But, dy'e hear, uncle, are you sure you have made Your bargain wisely? They may cut my throat When you are gone; and what are you the wiser? Dwindle, be you close to me.

Haz. I warrant you, we shall do things with discretion,

If he has but grace to look and talk courageously.

Bar. He may be valiant for aught I know;

D ij

Howsoever, this will be a secure way
To have him thought so, if he beat you soundly.

Neph. I do not like the company;
But I have drank wine too, and that's the best on't;
We may quarrel on even terms. Look to't, Dwindle.

Dwin. Here's your safeguard. [*Shewing his stick.*]

Haz. As I am a gentleman—be confident—
I'll wait on you down, sir.

Bar. By no means; let him beat you to purpose,
sir.

Haz. Depend upon me.

Bar. And when he has beat you, sir, I must beg
another favour.

Haz. Oh! command me, sir.

Bar. Courage, you know, not only keeps the men
in awe, but makes the women admire.

Haz. What, must I pimp for your nephew too?

Bar. Lack-a-day! No, no, no; though I'll let
him have his swing, too—but I must marry him forth-
with; and I have one in my eye, that will fit him to
a tittle.

Haz. Who is the happy creature you have destined
for him?

Bar. No less a jewel, I assure you, than your
friend's ward, Penelope; there's money and beauty
enough! Will you put in a word for him?

Haz. Both to the lady, and my friend, and imme-
diately too.

Bar. Only to clear the way a little, Mr. Hazard;

I have a tongue myself, and can use it too, when once it is set a going.

Haz. I have heard of you at the hall.

Bar. Nay, and my nephew can speech it too; ay, and has your repartees too, when he's a little in drink, and he sha'n't want for that.

Haz. You're in the right, Master Barnacle, not to let the hinges rust for want of a little oiling.

Bar. I have another use for you, if you'll introduce us.

Haz. I'll do it.

Bar. But don't forget to be beaten, though.

Haz. Do you suspect my honour?

Bar. I don't, I don't—Well, nephew, mind your hits—Mr. Hazard, yours—I am full of joy!—and, nephew, draw blood, do you hear? [Exit.]

Neph. Bye, uncle.

Haz. Come, sir: pray, gentlemen, bid my kinsman welcome; a spark that will demand your friendship.

Sell. His kinsman!—You are welcome.

Act. He has power to command your welcome.

Litt. If I mistake not, I have had the happiness to have been in your company before now.

Neph. Mine, sir?—D'ye hear, what if I quarrelled

[Aside to Hazard.]

With him first? 'twill prepare me the better.

Haz. Do as you please; that's without my conditions.

Neph. I'll but give him now and then a touch; I'll close

Well enough, I warrant you.—You been in my Company, sir?

Litt. Yes, and at the tavern.

Neph. I paid the reck'ning then.

Litt. You came into our room——

Neph. Tell me of coming into your room?
I'll come again. You're a superfluous gentleman.

Litt. How's this?

Haz. Let him alone.

Litt. Sir, remember yourself.

Neph. I'll remember what I please, and forget what I remember. Tell me of a reckoning! What is't? I'll pay't; no man shall make an ass of me, Farther than I list. I care not a fiddle-stick For any man's thund'ring; he that affronts Me, is the son of a worm, and his father's a whore. I care not a straw, nor a broken point For you. If any man dare drink to me, I won't go behind the door to pledge him.

Haz. Why here's to you, sir.

Neph. Why, there's to you, sir. Twit me with coming into a room! I could find in my heart to throw a pottle-pot—I name nobody—I will kick any man down stairs, that cannot behave himself like a gentleman. None but a slave would offer to pay a reck'ning before me. Where's the drawer? There's a piece at all adventures. He that is my friend, I

care not a rush; if any man be my enemy, he is an idle companion, and I honour him with all my heart.

Sell. This is a precious humour. Is he used to these mistakes?

Litt. Your kinsman gives you privilege.

Neph. I desire no man's privilege: it skills not whether I be kin to any man living.

Haz. Nay, nay, cousin, pray let me persuade you.

Neph. You persuade me! for what acquaintance? Mind your business, and speak with your taylor.

Haz. An' you be thus rude—

Neph. Rude, sir! What then, sir!—Hold me, Dwindle.

Sell. Nay, nay, Will, we bear with him for your sake,

He is your kinsman.

Haz. I am calm again.

Cousin, I am sorry any person here
Hath given you offence.

Neph. Perhaps, sir, you
Have given me offence. I do not fear you.
I have knock'd as round a fellow in my days.

Haz. And may again—

Sell. Be knock'd! A pox upon him; I know not
what to make of him.

Haz. Let me speak a word in private, sir.

Neph. I can be as private as you, sir.

Haz. Strike me a box o' th' ear presently. [*Aside.*

Neph. There's my hand on't— [*Strikes him.*

Sell. Nay, nay, gentlemen—

Act. Mr. Hazard—

Neph. Let him call me to account ; the reck'ning's paid.

Come, Dwindle—*Veni, vidi, vici.* Huzza ! [*Exit.*

Sell. The fellow's mad. Does he often mistake thus ?

Haz. His courage is a little hard mouthed, it runs away with him now and then ; we must exchange a thrust or two ; after bleeding he'll be cool.

Sell. The youth has a mind to shew himself ; he is just launched into life.

Litt. He'll be soon launch'd out of it again, if he goes on in this way.

Haz. Pr'ythee let's have no more of him ; I shall undertake to cure his fever.—But hark'e, friends, shall we meet at the old place this evening ?

Sell. By all means ; there will be deep play, I hear—my water-mark is but low ; but I'll go as deep as I can. Will not Wilding be of our party too ?

Haz. No, no ; he has a love-matter upon his hands : but should he hear the rattling of the dice, it will bring him from the arms of the finest woman in the kingdom.

Sell. Pooh, pooh ! you carry this too far.

Haz. I know him in this particular better than you ; when he is in the circle of the gaming-table, 'tis all magic, he has not power to move ; and I challenge the devil to bait his hook with a stronger temptation to draw him out of it.

Litt. Besides, among ourselves, what was once

with him occasional pleasure; is now become a necessary occupation: Jack Wilding has made a large gap in the widow's jointure.

Haz. Pshaw! let your gossiping; don't abuse the generous wine you have been drinking, by mixing such scandal as this with it——stay till you get with your mistresses over their ratafia, and when you're maudlin, open the sluices of slander: however, we'll try the experiment; I'll meet you in the evening, and we'll write to him from the field of battle, and see to which his courage most inclines.

Act. From love to gaming we'll his heart entice,
But woman will prevail——

Haz.——I say the dice.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter WILDING and PENELOPE.

Wilding.

THIS humour does become thee; I knew when
Thou didst consider what was offer'd thee,
Thy sullenness would shake off. Now thou look'st
Fresher than morning; in thy melancholy,
Thy clothes became thee not.

Pen. Y' are i'th' right;
I blam'd my taylor for't; but I find now,
The fault was in my countenance. Would we had

Some music; I could dance now; la, la, la.

[Sings and dances.]

Wild. Excellent! what a time shall I have on't?
Zounds, I am all on fire: how she glides!
Thou wot not fail, Pen?

Pen. This night——

Wild. At the hour of twelve.

Pen. But you must be as punctual i' th' conditions,
For my vow's sake; not speak a syllable.

Wild. I'll rather cut my tongue out than offend
thee;

Kissing is no language.

Pen. If it be not too loud;
We must not be seen together, to avoid
Suspicion; I would not for a world my cousin
Should know on't.

Wild. She shall die in ignorance.

Pen. No light, I charge you.

Wild. The devil shall not see us
With his sawcer eyes; "and if he stumble in
"The dark, there sha'not be a stone i' th' chamber
"To strike out fire with's horns." All things shall be
So close, no lightning shall peep in upon us.
Oh, how I long for midnight!

Pen. I have a scruple.

Wild. Oh, by no means, no scruples now.

Pen. When you
Have your desires upon me, you will soon
Grow cold in your affection, and neglect me.

Wild. Why, hang me if I do, I'll love thee ever:

I have cast already to preserve thy honour;
Thou shalt be married in a fortnight, coz;
Let me alone to find thee out a husband
Handsome and fit enough; we will love then too.

Pen. When I am married?

Wild. Without fear, or wit;

Can privilege, when thou hast a husband;
Dost think I will forsake thee, Pen? 'twere pity
O' my life, sweet—I shall love thee the better;
And I must tell thee——

'Tis my ambition to make a cuckold,
The only pleasure o' th' world; that imagination
Sweetens the rest, and I do love it mainly, mainly.

Pen. 'Tis double sin.

Wild. 'Tis treble pleasure, wench;
But we lose time, and may endanger thus
My wife into a jealousy, if she see us.
Farewell, farewell, dear Pen; at night remember;
I wo'not lose my sport for half an empire!

Pen. Oh, my fears, your wife's return'd.

Wild. The devil she is! What shall we do, Pen?

Pen. I'll retire—but seem you more kind to her,
lest her suspicions should betray us.

Wild. I will do any thing—I have a holiday in my
heart—away, away. [Exit Pen.]

Enter Mrs. WILDING.

Mrs. Wild. What, Mr. Wilding, so soon returned—
with smiles upon your face too—this is unusual; what
has happened, pray?

Wild. Why faith, wife, I have been reflecting on my conduct towards thee, and could I but hope you would forget my past behaviour, your life to come should be all sunshine.

Mrs. Wild. Is not this change too sudden to be certain? what has caused it, pray?

Wild. Conscience, conscience, my dear—though vanity and pleasure lulled it for a time, it has now awaked with all its stings, and shewn me all thy virtues, and my errors.

Mrs. Wild. Pray heaven that I am awake, for this is so like a dream.

Wild. Don't you be an infidel, wife, and reject the good now that is offered you. I tell you I'm another man; I am converted—when did you see me before with such pleasure in my face?

Mrs. Wild. Not this many a day—Has our cousin Penelope, husband, helped forward this conversion?—If she has, I am greatly obliged to her.

Wild. You are, indeed, wife, much obliged to her; she has done all in her power, I can assure you.

Mrs. Wild. Was not she here with you, at my coming in?

Wild. Yes, yes, she was here—she was indeed—was here with me—I have opened my mind to her—and with much zeal and friendship to you, she has confirmed me in my new faith.

Mrs. Wild. How much I am bound to her!

Wild. You are, indeed, wife: you have not a better friend in the world, I can tell you that—Now, what do you want?

Enter Page.

Page. Some gentlemen are waiting for you at the old place, and desire your company.

Mrs. Wild. You may tell them, that your master has forsaken his old haunts; he has seen the folly of them, and retires— *[Servant going.]*

Wild. Hold, hold, wife—such a message as this will make us the talk of the town; *I won't be too particular;* I will steal myself gently from my friends and pleasures, and rather wean, than tear myself from them—Let them know I will attend them. *[Exit Servant.]*

Mrs. Wild. As you please—Farewell, my penitent.

Wild. Farewell, my prudence—Had not this message come luckily to my assistance, my hypocrisy had been out of breath, and the devil had peeped out in spite of all the pains I had taken to conceal it. *[Aside.]*
[Exit Wilding.]

Enter PENELOPE.

Pen. How have I enjoyed his confusion! Faith, cousin, you acted it bravely.

Mrs. Wild. I am sorry that I am forced to dissemble.

Pen. The best of us can, and must, upon proper occasions.

Mrs. Wild. Thou dost hit my instructions excellently.

Pen. I have made work for somebody—you have

put me upon a desperate service ; if you do not relieve me, I am finely served.

Mrs. Wild. All has succeeded to my wish ; thy place I will supply to-night ; if he observe all the conditions, I may deceive my husband into kindness, and we both live to reward thee better—Oh, dear coz, take heed, by my example, upon whom thou placest thy affections.

Pen. Indeed, my dear, you take this too deeply ; my life for it, but we shall reclaim him at last.

Mrs. Wild. That I almost despair of ; and not so much from his total disregard of me, and his pursuit of other women, as from his uncontrollable passion for gaming.

Pen. He has understanding with all his frailties : and when those violent, irregular inclinations have had their scope, they must return to you.

Mrs. Wild. The passion of gaming, my dear, is not to be conquered even by the best understandings ; it is an absolute whirlpool ; wit, sense, love, friendship, and every virtue, are merely leaves and straws, that float upon the surface of the tide ; which, as they approach this gulf, are all drawn in, and sink to the bottom, as if they had never been.

Enter HAZARD.

Pen. Master Hazard—

Haz. Save you, Mrs. Wilding.

Mrs. Wild. You are welcome, sir.

Pen. He is a handsome gentleman.

[*Aside.*

Haz. Gone abroad?

Mrs. Wild. This moment left us, and, as I thought, to meet you, and his other sober friends.

Haz. I called upon him to attend him.

Mrs. Wild. The servant shall overtake him, and bring him back to you.

Haz. 'Tis too much trouble.

Mrs. Wild. What! for the best friend, of the best of husbands! you wrong me, sir. [*Exit Mrs. Wild.*

Haz. Thou art the best of women, I am sure—
Ha! this is the very gentlewoman! in good time—
Now for my promise to old Barnacle—I'll accost
her—What a pity it is this wench should be a morsel
for that glutton Wilding? [*Aside.*

Pen. What a pity it is this fellow should be a game-
ster, and companion of my modest guardian?—How
he eyes me! [*Aside.*

Haz. Your name is Penelope, I take it, lady?

Pen. If you take it, I hope you will give it me
again.

Haz. What again?

Pen. My name.

Haz. Would not you change it, if you could?

Pen. For the better, surely.

Haz. Wilt thou dispose of thyself?

Pen. Can you tell me of any honest man whom I
may trust myself with?

Haz. I'll tell thee a hundred.

Pen. Take heed what you say, sir,—a hundred ho-
nest men! why, if there were so many in the city,

'twere enough to forfeit their charter—but, perhaps, you live in the suburbs.

Haz. This wench will jeer me.

[*Aside.*

Pen. I hope you are not one, sir.

Haz. One of what?

Pen. One of those honest men you talked of so, to whom a maiden might intrust herself?

Haz. You have hit me, lady; come, I'll give thee counsel; and more, I'll help thee to a chapman too.

Pen. Alas! no chapmen now-a-days. Gentlemen are such strange creatures, "so infinitely cold, and "so void of every passion," that a handsome woman cannot reach their pity—Why have you this "so "strange" antipathy to us? To what end will gentlemen come, if this frost holds?

Haz. You are witty; but I suppose you have no cause of such complaint—though some men may want warmth, there is no general winter; and if I guess aright, you'll never be frost-bitt, lady—at least you may prevent it.

Pen. Are you acquainted with any knight-errants, who would succour a distress'd damsel?

Haz. Yes, I know of one—ay, and a bold one too, that dares adventure with you; nay, will take you for better and for worse.

Pen. And is he young too?

Haz. Oh, very young.

Pen. And wise?

Haz. Not over wise.

Pen. Yourself, belike.

Haz. Indeed, not over wise, I must confess; nor yet so witless, lady.

Pen. Who is the hero? Is he of your school? Is it from you that he has learned to travel the fashionable road? Can he drink, dice, roar, rake and royster? scour the streets a-nights, draw forth his valour, which the bottle gives him, upon the feeble watch, *but flies when danger comes?* or is he one of those delicate superfine thin-spun animals, who vegetate indeed, *but don't live;* who, having refined away all taste and sensibility, stalk about at public places, with their eyes half shut and their mouths open, among a circle of the finest women, *without hearing, seeing, tasting, understanding, or feeling any thing?*

Haz. Hold, hold: you'll never get a husband, lady, if thus you let your tongue outrun your wit.

Pen. Is he to get then? I thought that he was ready caught, and you had brought him in a cage.

Haz. Will you accept him?

Pen. What in a poke? unseen, untry'd? Has the youth no name?

Haz. Ay, and a weighty one—'tis Barnacle; young, rich and handsome.

Pen. Was this at his entreaty, or your own kind charity?

Haz. Look'e, lady, lose not time in questions—husbands are not so plenty—Will you have him?

Pen. I thank you for your goodness, sir, and would advise you, if you have more of these commodities,

to take them to another market—I am supplied already—and so your servant. *[Exit.]*

Haz. Gad-a-mercy! thou art a girl of spirit; supplied already? What can she mean?—not Wilding sure!—Impossible!—There is something about her that bespeaks her honest—I know not what to make of her—she may be a tumbler for all this.

Enter Page.

Page. My master, sir, will be at the appointment as soon as possible—he must call at his banker's first, and then he'll attend you. *[Exit.]*

Haz. 'Tis well. This Penelope has touched me strangely—She is certainly—but what's that to me? I'll go, and drown thought at the gaming-table. *[Exit.]*

SCENE II.

A Room in a Tavern. Enter SELLAWAY and Box-Keeper.

Sell. Was my message delivered to Wilding?

Box. Yes, sir; he will certainly attend you.

Sell. What gamesters have you within?

Box. The old set, sir.

Sell. What, no strangers?

Box. A country gentleman or two.

Sell. Will they make sport, think'st thou?

Box. The black-legs are about them: if they are

full of feathers (as I believe they are) we shall have good picking.

Sell. Well, do you set them a-going, and I'll be among 'em presently. *[Exit Bow-Keeper.]*

Enter HAZARD.

You are late, Hazard.

Haz. I could not come sooner; but don't you lose time—I must write a note, and will be with you at the table presently. *[Exit Sell.]*

What is the meaning, I can't tell; but it hurts me to think that this foolish girl should so easily hearken to the lewd call of this fellow Wilding—this abandon'd, unfeeling fellow! Perhaps, 'tis his vanity—I did not perceive, 'till she was in danger, that the agreeable jade had given me any concern. What is the reason, that to be eminently vicious is the readiest road to a woman's heart; nay, even to the best of 'em? But I'll rattle this nonsense out of my head; I have a hundred in my pocket, and the dice are set a-dancing. I'll strike up among 'em; and drown reflection——What, Wilding!

Enter WILDING.

Wild. Yes, you rogue, 'tis Wilding; the happy, gay, rapturous Wilding! Wish me joy, joy, man!

Haz. What, is your wife dead?

Wild. No, but my mistress is kind, which is very near as good a thing.

Haz. Thou art not mad?

Wild. No, no ; but I swell with imagination,
Like a tall ship bound for the fortunate islands ;
Top and top-gallant, my flags, and my figaries
Upon me, with a lusty gale of wind,
Able to rend my sails ; I shall o'er-run
And sink thy little bark of understanding,
In my career ; I fly before the wind, boy.

Haz. Pray Heaven rather
You do not spring a leak, and forfeit your
Ballast, my confident man of war ; I
Have known as stout a ship been cast away
In sight o' th' harbour.

Wild. The wench, the wench, boy !

Haz. The vessel you have been chasing——

Wild. Has struck sail ;
Is come in ; and cries, Aboard, my new lord of
The Mediterranean. We are agreed :
This is the precious night, Will ; twelve the hour,
That I must take possession of all, all,
You rogue you !

Haz. Pr'ythee descend from thy raptures, for the
gamesters are now coming, and we lose time.

Wild. The house fills a-pace. What are these, ha ?

Haz. Young Barnacle, and the vinegar-bottle his
man ; he has business of much import with you ; he
would be your rival with Penelope.

Wild. And may, if he pleases, when I have made
her fit for him. If I have the first glass, he shall
take the rest of the bottle, and welcome. But are
you in earnest ?

Has. Pr'ythee talk to him, and hear his overtures—He may be worth your listening to. PR to the table—if I win, I shall have no cause to repent my bargain with him; if I lose, by these hilts I'll make him the cause, and beat him. Pr'ythee keep him from me a few minutes, and then I'll relieve thee.

Wild. But how shall I do it?

Has. Tell him any whimsical tale; he is so absurd, that it will go glibly down.

Wild. I'll try his swallow then.

Has. Then luck with a hundred pieces! [Exit.

Wild. I must get a fool for her, and if this will bite, he is already got to my hands.

[Takes a news-paper out of his pocket.

Enter Nephew and DWINDLE.

Neph. Dwindle, that gentleman there is the guardian to the lady that I am to be in love with. Should not I shew away to him, and astonish him with a little learning, eh, Dwindle?

Dwin. Do, sir; let off a little Greek at him, and I warrant he'll be proud to call you cousin.

Neph. I am a little out of Greek at present, Dwindle; but for Latin, history, and philosophy——What is he reading, Dwindle?

Dwin. Ask him, sir.

Neph. *Quem libram legis, domine?*

Wild. Have you any commands with me, sir?

Neph. Pray, sir, what news is abroad these bad times?

Wild. Bad times, sir! when were we so great, so good, or so magnanimous? our ancestors were children to us; our exploits crowd so thick upon us, that we are obliged to send for the largest pyramid that can be got in Egypt to write 'em down upon, for the benefit of posterity—and I am now calculating what it will cost to bring it over.

Neph. A handsome penny, I warrant you. He's upon his fun, Dwindle, but I'll humour him. Where is the pyramid to be put, sir?

Wild. Upon Dover Cliff, sir; and the side facing the French coast is to be wrote in phosphorus, which will be read in the dark winter nights as far as Paris, with the same ease that you see what o'clock it is by St. Paul's at noon day.

Neph. Hark'e, Dwindle, this is very curious.

Dwin. Too curious to be true.

Neph. Have you any more news, sir? if you have, pray impart—I have a great appetite for news—vouchsafe me another slice.

Wild. A meal if you please—be there no more gentlemen to hear? 'Tis extraordinary fine news, in black and white, from *terra incognita*.

Neph. *Terra incognita*! What, has it no name?

Wild. It had, sir, but it is ashamed of it.

Neph. But what are they doing there?

Wild. Nothing at all—'tis inhabited by a nation without heads.

Neph. Without heads! Where are their eyes then?

Wild. They lost them first, sir, then their heads;

and they say the distemper, if not stopped, will spread over the rest of their body.

Neph. O wonderful ! a gentleman would not choose to travel there. How can they know one another without their heads, sir ?

Wild. They don't ; they are so changed, sir, they are neither known by themselves or other people ; having no heads, sir, they are continually playing at blindman's buff for the diversion of their neighbours.

Neph. *Monstrum ! horrendum ! informe ! ingens ! cui lumen ademptum*—ha, ha, ha ! Are there no politicians there ?

Wild. Did not I tell you it was a nation without heads ? all, all politicians.

Neph. *Qui capit ille facit.* I know your meaning ; your jest is not thrown away upon me.

“ *Wild.* Ha, ha ! extremely good ; apt and witty.”

Dwin. Now is your time—to him, sir.

Neph. I should be proud, sir, to have some nearer connections with a gentleman of your learning, and profound erudition.

Wild. I should be happy to know how, sir, and proud to be your friend and servant, in the true sense of the words.

Neph. Dwindle, my affairs are in a fine way. In every sense, I am your humble servant *in secula seculorum*. You must know, sir——

Wild. I'll know it by and by, if you please, for we are interrupted ; let us sport away a few pounds at

the table, and then I'll go to the tavern and be at your service *in secula seculorum*. [Exit.

Neph. Come along, Dwindle; if my fortune goes on as swimmingly as she has begun, I shall make a rare night on't. If I get my mistress, and fill my pockets, we'll be as drunk as lords. Come along, Dwindle. [Exeunt.

SCENE III.

Draws, and discovers the Gaming-table. Gamesters at Play; after some Time, and calling different Mains, enter LITTLESTOCK and ACRELESS.

Litt. A curse upon those reeling dice! that last in and in

Was out of way ten pieces. Canst lend me any Money? How have the dice dealt with thee?

Acr. Lost, lost—I defy thee. If my luck recover not,

I must be sober to-morrow. Damn'd, damn'd fortune!

Litt. Oh, for a hundred, and all made now.

Enter SELLAWAY.

Sell. Yonder's Hazard wins tyrannically, without Mercy: he came in but with a hundred pieces.

Litt. I'll get a fancy presently.

Acr. And how thrive the bones with his lordship?

Sell. His lordship's bones are not well set ; they are maliciously bent against him ; they will run him quite out of all.

Box-keeper calls again several Mains ; and after some warm Play, and much Money is won and lost, enter Nephew and DWINDLE.

Neph. More money ! Dwindle, call my uncle. I must have it for my honour : two hundred pieces more will serve my turn : in the mean time, I will play away, for want of cash, some superfluous things about me.

Dwin. By that time you are come to your shirt, I shall be with you.

Sell. He's blow'd up too.

[*Exit Dwin.*]

Enter HAZARD.

Haz. So, so, the dice in two or three such nights will be out of my debt ; and I may live to be a landlord again.

Sell. You are fortune's minion, Hazard.

Haz. You would seem to be no fool, because she dotes not

Upon you. Gentlemen, I must take my chance ; 'twas A lucky hundred pound ! Jack Wilding !

Enter WILDING, gnawing a Box.

What, eating the boxes ?

Wild. Chewing the cud a little ; I have lost all my money, Will ;

Thou hast made a fortunate night on't : wo't play
No more ?

Haz. 'Tis the first time I had the grace
To give off a winner—I would not tempt the dice.

Wild. What hast won ?

Haz. You do not hear me complain :
I have not been so warm these ten weeks.

Enter ACRELESS.

Wild. 'Tis frost in my pockets.

Acre. Master Hazard, I was afraid you had been
gone ; there's a fresh gamester come in, with his
pockets full of gold : he dazzles the gamesters, and
no man has stock to play with him.

Wild. The devil ! What is he ?

Acre. A merchant he seems ; he may be worth
your return.

Haz. Not for the exchange to-night, I am resolved.

Wild. Temptation ! now have I an infinite itch to
this merchant's pieces.

Haz. Thou wo't venture again then ?

Wild. I would if I could—but what do I forget ?
the wench, the fairy at home expects me.

Haz. I had forgot too : you wo' not play now ?

Wild. 'Tis now upon the time. [*Looking at his watch.*]
Curs'd misfortune !

Haz. You will not stay then ?

Wild. Hum—I ha' lost my money, and may re-
cover a pretty wench. Which hand ? This wanton-
ness ; this covetousness ; money is the heavier. Will,

dost hear? I'll requite thy courtesy—lend me two hundred pounds to attack the merchant, and I will give thee good interest, and the best security.

Haz. What the dice and your old luck, Jack?

Wild. No, damn the dice—I will give it thee upon Pen's fortune; she is so loving that I can command her, and hers.

Haz. No matter for her fortune, I'll be contented with less: pay me with the girl herself.

Wild. How do you mean?

Haz. I'll be contented with her personal security.

Wild. Pr'ythee, be plain; I am in haste, and every rattle of the dice makes my heart beat to be at the merchant. What wouldst have? I'll agree to any thing, every thing—

Haz. The wench at home expects you.

Wild. Well—

Haz. Let me supply thy place.

Wild. Ha!

Haz. And here are the two hundred pieces.

Wild. What! no—no—

Haz. Nay, then your servant, [Going.

Wild. Stay, Will—Now, now the devil is at work with me—he has thrown out two baits, and I know not which to strike at.

Haz. I must take my money home—Yours, Jack, yours— [Going.

Wild. Stay, stay, thou shalt, Will—I love thee for thy generosity—Gold is a real good, woman an imaginary one—Besides, a losing gamester will make

but a cool lover ; thou art warmed with success, and deservest her—She will be mine another time. Thou shalt have her.

Haz. Shall I ?

Wild. Yes.

Haz. Done.

Wild. And done.

Haz. There are bills for your money.

Wild. To-morrow you'll thank me for't. Be secret, she'll never know thee, for our conditions are to [*Whispers him.*] neither light, nor—and she must need conceive 'tis I. Here's my key—It conducts you up the back way into the house—The servants are in bed, the first door on the right hand in the gallery leads to her apartment.

Haz. Are you in earnest ?

Wild. Have you wit to apprehend the courtesy ?

Let me alone ; the wench and I shall meet
Hereafter, and be merry : take my key—
The merchant's money cools : away ; be wise,
And keep conditions : I must to the gamester ;
Farewell ; remember not to speak a word.

Haz. What, kiss and tell ; O, fie for shame.

Wild. Success to thee, Will.

Haz. And to thee, Jack. [*Exeunt severally.*]

Enter Mrs. WILDING and PENELOPE, with Candles.

Pen. I wish it may answer your purpose.

Mrs. Wild. I cannot lose any thing by the trial ; the scheme is an innocent one, and if I can but rouse

my husband a little from his lethargy to the least sense of shame, who knows what may happen?

Pen. Hark!—are you sure you heard nothing?

Mrs. Wild. Nothing but your maid going to bed.

Pen. Not come yet!—It is past the time too—'Tis very strange.

Mrs. Wild. Indeed, my dear Pen, this lover of yours is most terribly unpolite.

Pen. My vanity is a little mortified at it, I must confess—A fine gallant, indeed!

Mrs. Wild. You see, child, this gaming! it destroys every other passion, good or bad—And what hopes, think you, have I to draw him from the spell, when even you, Penelope, with all your charms, cannot break the enchantment?

Pen. Who knows but there may be some better way to account for his stay? Why may not his conscience and his reason together have debated this matter a little seriously, and tho' they have been tolerably pliant heretofore, may grow resty at a crime of this nature.

Mrs. Wild. Come, come, let us not flatter ourselves too far: his reason and conscience are at present very good friends with his passions, and attend him with great alacrity in all his parties of pleasure.

Pen. Hark! I am sure I hear him.

Mrs. Wild. Indeed you are mistaken; 'tis your pride now that fancies so—Don't imagine that he'll cast a single thought upon you, while he has a single guinea in his pocket.

Pen. Ay, ay, that's your jealousy, cousin—But I know—Upon my word I hear him—Indeed I do—Hark! he's now unlocking the door.

Mrs. Wild. No, no—Hush—You are in the right—I hear my thief—he's coming the back way—Take the candles into your chamber, and be ready to come in at the signal. Bless me, how frightened I am!

Pen. Are you, my dear? Then do you take my part, and I'll take yours.

Mrs. Wild. Get you gone, you fool; I am not in a condition to trifle. I have more at stake than you imagine. [*Exit Penelope with candles.*] Now for it. I wish it was over.
[*Sighs and retires.*]

Enter HAZARD.

Haz. I thought I never should have got hither.—But where I am I can neither feel nor tell. And, now I am here, I could almost wish myself back again. I have some qualms about this business; and were I not afraid of being laughed at, I would certainly return. But, thanks to the spirit of the times, gentlemen are much less afraid of being profligate than ridiculous.
[*Feeling about.*]

Mrs. Wild. He has certainly been drinking, by his muttering so to himself. Now to catch my spark—Hem, hem!

Haz. There she is, and all my fears are fled—Hem, hem! [*They approach, and when they meet he offers to kiss her.*]

Mrs. Wild. How violent he is! I have not had such a favour from him these two years. [*Aside.*]

Haz. How modest we are. [*She stamps.*]

Enter PENELOPE, with lights.

What's the matter?—Ha! a light——

Who have we got here? We are discover'd.

Mrs. Wild. Discover'd—ha! [*Screams.*] Who are you?

Pen. What's the matter here?

Haz. Mrs. Wilding!

Mrs. Wild. Mr. Hazard!

Pen. Your servant, good folks! [*Curtysing.*] What, my good cousin and Mr. Hazard at hide and seek in the gallery, in my guardian's absence. You are a most generous gentleman indeed! you are for providing every way, I see, for distressed ladies..

Mrs. Wild. For Heaven's sake, Mr. Hazard, how got you here?

Haz. Upon my soul, madam, I scarce can tell you.

Mrs. Wild. You have squeezed my fingers most unmercifully.

Pen. So, so!

Haz. Upon my soul, madam, it was all a mistake. My errand at present was not with you, but with that lady.

Pen. With me! What business, pray? To pinch my fingers?

Haz. Here are my credentials. [*Shews a key.*] I was only to act by deputation from a certain friend of mine.

Pen. Which I suppose is a certain good guardian of mine.

Mrs. Wild. And who is most certainly my virtuous husband.

Haz. I am so astonished, I hardly know whether I am awake.

Pen. To be sure!—You unlock people's doors, get into their houses, seize upon their wives, and all in your sleep.

Haz. Ladies, though I may, perhaps, suffer in your opinions by my silence, yet I could wish, for my friend's sake, my own, and yours, that you would give me your pardon, and peaceably send me about my business; for indeed I am most sincerely ashamed and sorry.

Pen. Poor modest gentleman! had a housebreaker been caught in the fact, he would have made just the same apology. But no pardon from me, without a free and full confession.

Mrs. Wild. I can say nothing, Mr. Hazard, in your justification; but if you have a mind to make all the amends in your power, you will join with me in a plot I have just now thought of; for though Mr. Wilding may not have love enough to be jealous of me, I know he has too much pride to be easy, if he thought I was false to him; and what must he feel when he believes me innocently so, and knows himself to be the cause of it?

Pen. I adore you, my dear Mrs. Wilding, for the thought. I long to be revenged of him for his base design upon me; and, now you have him in your

power, if you don't torment him thoroughly, I'll never forgive you as long as I live.

Mrs. Wild. Let me alone for that. Mr. Hazard has only to behave as if he had succeeded in his design upon you. But let us confer notes together below stairs.

Haz. Ladies, you shall command my life, and my best services.

Pen. Best and worst, they are always ready, I'll say that for Mr. Hazard.

Haz. Indeed, lady, you know but half of me.

Pen. The worst half.

Haz. I fear so ; but let me assure you both, that with all my frailties, I am much happier in forwarding this scheme of virtue, than I should have been in the success of my folly.

Pen. *Do you believe him ?*

Mrs. Wild. I am confident of it. Don't mind her, Mr. Hazard, but follow me.

Pen. *Mr. Hazard !*

Haz. *Madam !*

Pen. The devil was sick, the devil a monk would be ;

The devil was well ; the devil a monk was he.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

WILDING'S House. Enter Mrs. WILDING and
BARNACLE.

Barnacle.

BUT has not Master Hazard in no wise opened his business to you, lady, your husband, or your fair cousin ? I had his promise for it.

Mrs. Wild. What business, good sir ? I pray you, speak.—This interruption is unfortunate. [*Aside.*

Bar. Thus, then ; I have, lady, a longing, as it were, to be more nearly connected with your family. You must needs know what I would say.

Mrs. Wild. Indeed I am no scholar, and this is all Greek to me.

Bar. My nephew understands Greek, lady ; ay, and Latin too ; and geography, and poetry, and philosophy ; and is withal as valiant——

Mrs. Wild. 'Tis the peculiar blessing of the times ; our young men are so learned and brave, and our old ones so wise and virtuous, that we are the astonishment of the whole world. 'Tis the golden age, sir. But your business.

Bar. Vouchsafe me, lady, one plain answer to an honest question.—Has your fair kinswoman, the beautiful Penelope, yet transferred her affections to any one happy mortal ?

Mrs. Wild. If she had not, would Mr. Barnacle become a purchaser?

Bar. Me, madam? No, no no! Alas, Alas! my dancing days are over!—But for my nephew—Oh, that nephew of mine! You have seen him, and heard of him, surely, have you not, madam?

Mrs. Wild. My mind, of late, Mr. Barnacle, has had little attention, but to its own troubles.

Bar. Alack, alack, I know it well! You are much discoursed of, and pitied by the world, and I'll be bold to say, if there be any man that troubles you, or any that you would have talked withal, let him be who he will, I'll rid you of that care. He that shall offer to disturb you but in a thought, do you mark me, madam? I'll take an order with him——

Mrs. Wild. What will you do, sir?

Bar. Don't mistake me; I'll do nothing——But I'll send my nephew. He shall work him, and jerk him, I warrant you. You don't know how my nephew is improved since he came from the university: he is a perfect knight-errant, the very St. George for England!—Why, madam, he has had a pluck at the very flower of chivalry, ay, and cropped it too; the very Donzel del Phebo of the time; and all the roaring blades lower their topsails to him. I'll say no more—Name but the man whom you but frown upon, and I'll send my nephew to him.

Mrs. Wild. I thank you, sir; I have no enemy to exercise his prowess upon; my discontents are known

to flow from a nearer person—I am ashamed to say—

Bar. Your husband—Say but the word, and I'll send my nephew to him; and were he ten husbands he should mollify him. Don't spare him. Had you but seen him baffle a squire this morning!

Mrs. Wild. These praises of your nephew, Mr. Barnacle, are thrown away upon me; 'tis my cousin must be warmed with them; and here she comes—So I shall leave your eloquence to present the flower of chivalry to her, which I think would be an ornament to the fairest bosom in the kingdom.

Bar. Madam, you do my nephew honour; and when you are in the humour to have any man beaten, either in your own family or in the kingdom—I'll send my nephew to him.

Enter PENELOPE.

Mrs. Wild. Dear Pen, dispatch this old fool as fast as you can, and in the mean time I'll dispatch my page to fetch my wandering turtle home. *[Exit.*

Bar. Fair lady, I am your servant. *[Bows.*

Pen. Good sir, I am yours. *[Curtseys.*

Bar. I fear my visit may offend.

Pen. I am but ill at ease, indeed, sir, and most unfit for company.

Bar. What, so young and melancholy! Oh, 'tis a pity!

Pen. It is indeed, and yet I am melancholy.

Bar. And for what, fair lady ?

Pen. For a gentleman.—What would you have a fair lady melancholy for ?

Bar. I'll send my nephew to him——

Pen. To bring him to me ?

Bar. Ay, bring him, and swing him, if you desire it. You can make him do any thing, madam. Say you but the word, and he'll take the Great Turk by the whiskers——Oh, my nephew's a pretty fellow !—Don't you know him, madam ?

Pen. Not I, sir.

Bar. Not know my nephew ! I'll send him to you.

Pen. What to do, sir ?

Bar. He shall do any thing. The town's afraid of him.

Pen. Oh, pray, keep him from me then !

Bar. He'll hurt no woman. But for the men——

Pen. Can he make 'em better, sir ? If he could, we should be much obliged to him.

Bar. And he shall, lady.

Pen. Then let it be quickly ; for I'll stay till they are mended, before I think of a husband.

Bar. What think you, sweet lady, of the hero himself ?

Pen. My thoughts must not run after such costly fruit.

Bar. My nephew is dying for you.

Pen. Poor young man !—But if we were both dying, my guardian would see us at our last gaspings before he'd consent.

Bar. Would he? Then my nephew shall talk to him. Let him alone to get the consent.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Your nephew, sir, is below, and begs to be admitted to the idol of his affections.

Pen. Shew the gentleman up. [*Exit Servant.*]

Bar. Idol of his affections! There's an expression for you.—My nephew is a fine scholar and a great hero. Here he is. I shall leave you together. Your servant, madam.

Enter Nephew and DWINDLE.

To her, nephew; now is your time. I have cleared the way; she's your own; you'll have a fine reception. I am glad to see you are half drunk—Be bold and conquer. [*Exit.*]

Neph. Ne'er fear me, uncle; when I am rocky, I defy any woman in Christendom. I have not been in bed to-night. When I am bosky, I never flinch.

Dwin. To her, to her, sir.

Neph. Shall I attack her with a little learning, Dwindle? If I could but put her into confusion, the town's my own.

Dwin. Give her a broadside then.

Neph. I had rather beat the watch than talk to her. My courage fails me, Dwindle.

Pen. I must send this fool a packing. [*Aside.*]—Do you trust yourself abroad, sir, without your un-

cle? You are very young, and there are a great many coaches and carts in this metropolis.

Neph. Coaches and carts, Dwindle! I am dumb, *et vox faucibus hæsît.*

Dwin. Give her one fire first.

Neph. I had rather go back again, Dwindle.

[*Going.*

Dwin. What, turn your back upon the enemy!

Neph. I can't face her, *per deos immortales.*

Pen. If you have any matter to communicate, let me beg to know it immediately, for I'm in haste.

Neph. I had much matter to communicate, but your coaches and carts have drove it quite out of my head.

Pen. Poor gentleman! When you have recovered your senses, and the use of your tongue, return to me again, and I shall be at your service; in the mean time, I would recommend a gentle nap to you; and I'll pay a visit to my monkey: and so, sir, your servant.

[*Exit.*

Neph. This is a fine reception, truly, Dwindle!

Dwin. So, so, sir.

Neph. I am in a damn'd passion, Dwindle. I'll go and kick her monkey.

Dwin. Leave that to me, sir, and I'll do his business.

Neph. But this must not pass so. What does my uncle mean, and Mr. Wilding mean, by sending me here to be laughed at? If I meet 'em, wo betide 'em.

I am so full, that unless I have some vent I shall burst. Don't speak to me, Dwindle, or I shall certainly fall upon you. Oh, for a man, woman, or child, now!—I must beat something. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

The Street. Enter HAZARD and WILDING.

Wild. How now, Will! Thou look'st desperately this morning. Didst sleep well to-night?

Haz. Do not enquire, but curse yourself till noon. I am charitable, I do not bid thee hang thyself; and yet I have cause to thank thee. I would not have lost the turn for all the money I won last night—Such a delicious theft!

Wild. I think so.

Haz. I found it so, and dare make my affidavit.

Wild. Thou didst not see her?

Haz. Nor speak to her. To what purpose?

Wild. Now do I
Grow melancholy.

Haz. If thou dost envy me,
There is some reason for't; thou dost imagine
I have had pleasure in my days; but never,
Never so sweet a skirmish! Not a kiss,
But had Elysium in't.

Wild. I was a rascal.

Haz. If thou didst know but half so much as I,

Orcouldst imagine it, thou wouldst acknowledge
Thyself worse than a rascal on record.

Wild. Hold your tongue.

Haz. I have not words t' express, how soft, how
bounteous,

How every thing a man with full desires
Could wish a lady.

Wild. Pr'ythee, be quiet. But tell me, Will——

Haz. Don't question me farther.

It is too much happiness to remember :

I am sorry I have said so much.

Wild. Was I not curs'd,

To lose my money and such delicate sport ?

Haz. But that I love thee well, shouldst ne'er
enjoy her.

Wild. Why ?

Haz. I would almost cut thy throat.

Wild. You would not.

Haz. But take her ; and if thou part'st with her
one night more for less than both the Indies, thou'lt
lose by her. She has paid me for my service ; I ask
nothing else.

Wild. If she be such a precious morsel, Will,
I think you may be satisfied.

Haz. Take heed,
And understand thyself a little better.
I think you may be satisfied—With what ?
A handsome wench ! 'Tis heresy ; recant it ;
I never shall be satisfied.

Wild. You do not purpose
A new encounter.

Haz. For thy sake,
'Tis possible I may not: I would have
My game kept for me. What I have done, faith,
Was upon your entreaty; if you have
The like occasion hereafter, I
Should have a hard heart to deny thee, Jack.

Wild. Thou hast fir'd my blood!—That I could
call back time,
To be possess'd of what my indiscretion
Gave up to thy enjoying! But I am comforted,
She thinks 'twas I; and we hereafter may
Be free in our delights—Now, sir, the news
With you?

Enter Page.

Page. My mistress did command my diligence
To find you out, and pray you come to speak with
her.

Wild. When I am at leisure.

Page. 'Tis of consequence.

Wild. Is Penelope with her?

Page. Not when she sent me forth.
Shall I tell my mistress you will come to her?

Wild. How officious you are for your mistress, sir-
rah!

What, said she I came not home all night?

Page. Nothing to me. But my eyes ne'er beheld
her look so pleasantly.

Wild. Well, well, say I'll come. [Exit Page.

Haz. Now, farewell, Jack. I need not urge your secrecy touching your mistress—I must laugh at thee, and heartily, ha, ha, ha!—So, farewell, farewell, Jack, ha, ha, ha! [Exit.

Wild. To say the truth, I have shewed myself a coxcomb. A pox o' play, that made me double loser!—For aught I know, she may never admit me to such a turn again—and then I ha' punished myself ingeniously—Oh, fool, fool, fool! [Exit.

SCENE III.

*WILDING's House. Enter Mrs. WILDING, and
PENELOPE.*

Mrs. Wild. Is he coming, say'st thou?

Pen. I saw him turn at the corner of the square.

Mrs. Wild. Is he alone?

Pen. Alone, and seems disordered: with his eyes upon the ground, and his arms folded thus, he walks by starts, and shews all is not right within.

Mrs. Wild. Now comes the trial—Hark! I hear him. You must away. Now for it. [Exit Pen.

Enter WILDING.

So, my good penitent man, I find your conscience was sincere; you have at last taken a farewell to your follies, but such dear friends you were, you took up all the night in parting.

Wild. I have bid farewell to them for ever. It was the last effort of expiring passion; but 'tis gone, and now I'm a new man—Heigho! [Sighs.]

Mrs. Wild. Why do you sigh, husband?
How d'ye, sweetheart? [Smiling.]

Wild. Well, but a little melancholy.
You look more sprightly, wife; something has pleas'd you.

Mrs. Wild. It has indeed; and if it be no stain
To modesty, I would enquire how you
Sped the last night.

Wild. I lost my money.

Mrs. Wild. I don't mean that. [Smiling.]

Wild. Don't mean that?—I am not betray'd, I hope!

What do you mean?

Mrs. Wild. Y'are a fine gentleman!

Wild. 'Tis so; could she not keep her own counsel?
[Aside.]

Mrs. Wild. And have behav'd yourself most wittily,
And I may say most wrongfully: this will
Be much for your honour, when 'tis known.

Wild. What will be known?

Mrs. Wild. Do you not blush? Oh, fie!
Is there no modesty in man?

Wild. Riddle my riddle my re—Pox of your ambiguities: what would you have?—I would not yet seem conscious.

Mrs. Wild. 'Tis time then to be plain; it was a wonder

I could be so long silent : did you like
Your last night's lodging ?

Wild. Very, very well ;

I went not to bed all night.

Mrs. Wild. Not to bed all night !—Think again,
my dear—your mem'ry may fail you.

Wild. What do you mean ?—I say I have not been
in bed to-night ; and had you any eyes but jealous
ones, you'd see by mine I have not slept to-night.

Mrs. Wild. Look at me, husband.

Wild. So I do—there ! there ! there !—What
mummery's this ?

Mrs. Wild. Now tell me—do you feel no small
compunction at thus looking in my injured face ?

Wild. A pox upon these stale expostulations ; must
I ever be dinned with them ? and cann't my refor-
mation work a change in you ?—thou art the strangest
woman——

Mrs. Wild. Soft, soft, my good husband—Didst
you meet Penelope last night ?

Wild. No ; I met no Penelope last night.

Mrs. Wild. And were you not to meet her ?—
Speak, my dear.

Wild. Pr'ythee, let me alone, my head aches.

Mrs. Wild. No, no, 'tis my head that aches—Did
you not pass the night, the live-long night, in wan-
ton, stolen embraces.

Wild. Refuse me if I did.

Mrs. Wild. You did not lie with Mrs. Penelope,
my kinswoman ?

Wild. Cuckold me, if I did. I swear——

Mrs. Wild. Come, come, don't swear—but 'twas no fault of yours, no fault, no virtue—but this is no time to expostulate these actions—in brief, know 'twas my plot. [Smiling.

Wild. What plot ?

Mrs. Wild. Yes, yes, my plot, my dear. [Smiling.

Wild. My plot, my dear ! what do you smirk and giggle at ?—Leave your idiot tricks, and tell me what you mean.

Mrs. Wild. You are so testy—but I shall please you.

Wild. Shall you ? I wish you would——

Mrs. Wild. Thus then—I have with sorrow long observed which way your warm affection moved, and found it would be in vain with open power to oppose you ; I therefore worked by stratagem—I got the secret of your meeting, and I wrought so with my honest cousin, to supply her wanton place, that with some shame, at last, I might deceive your hard heart into kindness.

Wild. That, that again, sweet wife ; and be a little Serious—Was it your plot to excuse your cousin, And be the bedfellow ?

Mrs. Wild. 'Twas indeed, my dear.

Wild. 'Twas in hell, my dear.

Mrs. Wild. Bless me !

Wild. I am fitted, fitted with a pair of horns
Of my own making !

Mrs. Wild. What, do you take it thus ?

Should you not rather thank, and think upon
That providence, that would not have you lost
In such a forest of loose thoughts. Come, be
Yourself again ; I am your handmaid still ;
And have learn'd so much piety to conceal
Whatever should dishonour you.

Wild. It buds——

It buds already ! I shall turn stark mad——
Horn mad !——

Mrs. Wild. What ails you ? Are you vex'd
Because your wantonness has thriv'd so well ?

Wild. Well with a vengeance ! And did you really
contrive the plot yourself ?

Mrs. Wild. I did.

Wild. You lie—I contriv'd some part of it—and can
you prove all this to be true ?

Mrs. Wild. I can—witness those tender joys, which,
though not meant for me——

Wild. Oh, damn your description !
I am satisfied.

Mrs. Wild. You seem angry——I did expect your
thanks.

Wild. Yes, I do thank you, thank you heartily ;
Most infinitely thank you.

Mrs. Wild. Doth this merit
No other payment but your scorn ? Then know,
Bad man, 'tis in my power to be reveng'd ;
And what I had a resolution
Should sleep in silent darkness, now shall look
Day in the face ; I'll publish to the world

How I am wrong'd, and with what stubbornness
You have despis'd the cure of your own fame;
Nor shall my cousin suffer in her honour.
I stoop as low as earth to shew my duty;
But too much trampled on, I rise to tell
The world, I am a woman.

Wild. No, no; hark you,
I do not mock you. I am taken with
The conceit; what a fine thing I have made myself?
Ne'er speak on't, thy device shall take; I'll love thee,
And kiss thee for't; thou'st paid me handsomely:
An admirable plot, and follow'd cunningly.

Mrs. Wild. Then I'm happy, husband, if you're
sincere.

Wild. Oh, very sincere, and very happy.

Mrs. Wild. In earnest of that sincerity,
Vouchsafe the kiss you promised.

Wild. There—there.

[*Kisses her.*]

I'll see thee anon again; and lie with thee
To-night, without a stratagem. Penelope
Expects thee; keep all close: dear wife, no sen-
tences.

[*Hurries Mrs. Wilding off.*]

I'm trick'd and trimm'd at my own charges rarely!

[*Exit.*]

ACT V. SCENE I.

The Street. Enter WILDING.

Wilding.

I am justly punish'd now for all my tricks,
And pride o' th' flesh! I had ambition
To make men cuckolds; now the devil has paid me,
Paid me i' th' same coin; and I'll compare
My forehead with the broadest of my neighbours:
But, ere it spreads too monstrous, I must have
Some plot upon this Hazard. He supposes
He has enjoy'd Penelope, and my trick's
To drive the opinion home, to get him marry her,
And make her satisfaction. The wench
Has oft commended him; he may be won to't.
I never meant to part with all her portion:
Perhaps he'll thank me for the moiety;
And this dispos'd on, she's conjur'd to silence.
It must be so.

Enter HAZARD.

Haz. Jack Wilding, how is't, man?
How goes the plow at home? What says the lady
Guinever, that was humbled in your absence?
You have the credit with her, all the glory:
What says she, Jack? Does she not hide her eyes,
And blush, and cry, you are a fine gentleman!
Turn a one side, or drop a handkerchief,

H

And stoop, and take occasion to leer
And laugh upon thee ?

Wild. Nothing less : I know not
What thou'st done to her, but she's very sad.

Haz. I'll be hanged then.

Wild. Thou must imagine,
I did the best to comfort her,

Haz. She's melancholy
For my absence, man : I'll keep her company
Again to-night.

Wild. And nothing now but sighs, and cries I have
Undone her.

Haz. Ay, ay, the old cant—she's a fool.

Wild. To be plain,
Although she has no thought but I was her gallant,
You are the only argument of her sadness.

Haz. How can that be ?

Wild. When I had merrily
Excus'd what had been done, she fetch'd a sigh,
And with some tears reveal'd her love to you ;
That she had lov'd you long, but by this act
Of mine, d'ye mark ? she was become unworthy
To hope so good a fortune ; I cannot tell,
But she is strangely passionate.

Haz. For me ?

Wild. Ay, for you.

Haz. Why, now I do recollect myself,
She has sometimes smil'd upon me.

Wild. Nay, believe it,
She is taken with thee above all the world.

Haz. And yet she was content you should——
'Bove all the world.

Wild. But 'twas your better fate
To be the man ; it was her destiny
Contrived it thus—Thou art a gentleman,
And must consider the poor gentlewoman.

Haz. What wouldst ha' me do ?

Wild. Make her amends.

Haz. What do you mean ?

Wild. Marry her.

Haz. Marry a strumpet !

Wild. You had first possession, and hadst thou married earlier, thou couldst but have had her first ; besides, none know but we ourselves, and we, for weighty reasons, must be secret.

Haz. Why, ay, that's true ; but then for weightier reasons, I must not marry her——

Wild. Come, come, thou hast a tender heart,
Heav'n knows ! she may be desperate.

Haz. A fair riddance ; we have enough o' th' tribe ;
I am sorry I cannot furnish her expedition with a pair
of my own garters.

Wild. I know thou art more charitable ; she may
prove a happy wife ; what woman but has frailty ?

Haz. Let her make the best on't ; set up shop i' th'
Strand or Westminster, she may have custom.

Wild. She has a portion will maintain her like a
gentlewoman, and your wife.

Haz. Where is't ?

Wild. In my possession ; and I had rather thou
Shouldst have it than another.

Haz. Thank you heartily.

A single life has single care : pray keep it.

Wild. Come, thou shalt know I love thee——thou
shalt have

More by thousands, than I resolv'd

To part with, 'cause I would call thee cousin too ;

Ten thousand pounds, Will, she has to her portion !

I hop'd to put her off with half the sum,

That's truth ;——some younger brother would have
thank'd me,

And given me my *quietus*——Is't a match ?

Haz. A pretty sum ! Ten thousand pounds will make
What's crooked, straight again.

Wild. Th'art in the right ;

Or for the better sound, as the grammarians

Say, I will call it——fifty hundred pounds !

By'r lady, a pretty stock ; enough, an' need be,

To buy up half the women in a county.

Haz. Here's my hand ; I'll consider on't no farther ;
Is she prepar'd ?

Wild. Leave that to me.

Haz. No more.

Wild. I'll instantly about it.

Haz. Will you confirm this before witnesses ?

Wild. Bring a hundred——bring them presently.

Haz. I'll follow you.

Wild. Now I'm a little easy——

The bitt'rest pill, when gilded, will be swallow'd.

[Exit Wild.

Haz. Ha, ha!

The project moves better than I expected;

What pains he takes out of his ignorance?

Enter BARNACLE.

Barn. Oh! sir, I am glad I ha' found you.

Haz. I was not lost.

Barn. My nephew, sir, my nephew.

Haz. What of him?

Barn. He's undone, he's undone! you have undone him.

Haz. What's the matter?

Barn. You have made him, sir, so valiant, I am afraid

He's not long liv'd: he quarrels now with every body:
And roars, and domineers, and shakes the pent-
houses.

What shall I do? I fear he will be kill'd:

I take a little privilege myself,

Because I threaten to disinherit him;

But nobody else dares talk or meddle with him:

Is there no way to take him down again,

And make him coward?

Haz. There are ways to tame him.

Barn. Now I wish heartily you had beaten him
For the hundred pounds.

Haz. That may be done yet.

Barn. Is't not too late? But d'ye think 'twill humble him?

I expect every minute he's abroad
To hear he has kill'd somebody, or receive him
Brought home with half his brains, or but one leg.

Haz. What would you have me do?

Barn. I'll pay you for't,
If you will beat him soundly, sir, and leave him
But as you found him; for if he continue
A blade, and be not kill'd, he won't escape
The gallows long; and 'tis not for my honour
He should be hang'd.

Haz. I shall deserve as much
To lay this mettle, as I had to quicken it.

Barn. Nay, 'tis my meaning to content you, sir;
And I shall take it as a favour too,
If for the same price you made him valiant,
You will unblade him: here's the money, sir;
As weighty gold as t'other: 'cause you should not
Lay it on lightly: break no limb, and bruise him
Three quarters dead, I care not: he may live
Many a fair day after it.

Haz. You shew
An uncle's love in this; trust me to cure
His valour.

Barn. He's here; do but observe.

Enter Nephew.

And beat him, sir, accordingly.

Neph. How now, uncle?

Barn. Thou art no nephew of mine, th'art a rascal!
I'll be at no more charge to make thee a gentleman :
Pay for your dice and drinkings ; I shall have
The surgeon's bills brought shortly home to me ;
Be troubled to bail thee from the sessions ;
And afterwards make friends to the recorder
For a reprieve ; yes—I will see thee hang'd first.

Neph. And be at the charge to paint the gallows
too ;

If I have a mind, the waits shall play before me,
And I'll be hang'd in state, three stories high, uncle :
But first I'll cut your throat.

Barn. Bless me ! defend me.

Enter ACRELESS, SELLAWAY, and LITTLESTOCK.

Acr. How now, what's the matter ?

Sell. Master Barnacle !

Barn. There's an ungracious bird of my own nest,
Will murder me.

Litt. He wo'not sure ?

Haz. Put up,
And ask your uncle presently forgiveness ;
Or I will huff thee.

Neph. Huff me ?—I will put up
At thy entreaty.

Haz. Gentlemen, you remember
This noble gallant.

Acr. Cousin of yours, I take it.

Haz. A fine cousin ! He lent me in your company
A box o' th' ear.

Neph. No, no, I gave it,
I gave it freely; keep it, never think on't;
I can make bold with thee another time;
Would it had been twenty.

Haz. One's too much to keep.
I am a gamester, and remember always
My debts of honour—First, the principal—

[*Strikes him.*

And this for the use—

[*Strikes him again.*

Neph. Use! Wouldst th'adst given it my uncle.

Haz. They have cost him already two hundred
pounds

And upwards, shotten herring, thing of noise!

Neph. Oh, for my man Dwindle,
And his basket-hilt now! my uncle shall rue this.

Haz. Down, presently, and before these gentlemen;
Desire his pardon.

Neph. How! desire his pardon?

Haz. Do it I say.

Neph. I will ask his pardon; I beseech you, un-
cle——

Haz. And swear.

Neph. And do swear——

Haz. To be obedient, never more to quarrel.

Neph. Why, look you, gentlemen, I hope you are
persuaded,

By taking this so patiently, that I am
Not over valiant.

Barn. I suspect him still.

Neph. Indeed you need not, uncle.

Haz. If ever he prove rebellious, in act
Or language, let me know it.

Neph. Will you not give
Me leave to roar abroad, a little, for my credit?

Barn. Never, sirrah; now I'll tame you.
I thank you gentlemen; command me for
This courtesy.

Neph. 'Tis possible I may
With less noise grow more valiant hereafter:
'Till then I am in all your debts.

Barn. Be rul'd,
And be my nephew again: this was my love,
My love, dear nephew.

Neph. If your love consist
In kicking, uncle, let me love you again.

Barn. Be silent, sirrah.

Neph. I am dumb.

Acr. Then his uncle paid for't?

Haz. Heartily, heartily.
Whither are you going, gentlemen?

Acr. As you shall lead us, Hazard.

Haz. 'Tis lucky then;
Will you be witnesses to a desperate
Bargain I mean to drive within this hour?
No less than bartering for my liberty.

Sell. The devil! not be married, sure?

Haz. 'Tis even so—and were I sure that this my
valiant friend [*To Nephew.*] would not be angry at
my choice, I'd tell you who was the maid elect.

Neph. Choose where you list; I'll ne'er be angry

more, nor woo again; I have had of both my *quantum sufficit*.

Haz. Her name's Penelope.

Neph. Take her, and welcome; she'll pay you in the coin you've favour'd me with.

Barn. May you win and wear her, Mr. Hazard; and since my nephew merits not the maid, I wish you and her happiness.

Haz. Thanks, Mr. Barnacle—I will away to Wildings, and prepare for your reception—will you follow me?

Litt. We will.

[*Exit Hazard.*]

Barn. What say you, gentlemen? shall we drink this couple in a glass of sack, and then to wish 'em joy?

Acr. Agreed.

Neph. I'm for any thing.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

WILDING'S House. Enter Mrs. WILDING and PENELOPE.

Pen. Why, you would not have me encourage this Hazard?

Mrs. Wild. Indeed but I would.

Pen. What a gamester! a profligate! No, no, thanks to youth, good spirits, and a tolerable person, not so desperate as that, Mrs. Wilding.

Mrs. Wild. His gaming is accidental—A younger

brother, and bred to no business, naturally leads to the dice for his supplies. I know he is tired of the company he has kept; his honour is as yet unimpeached, and with your fortune what can either of you want, or desire farther?

Pen. Indeed, I dare not think of it. *And yet, cousin, you might persuade me to any thing. I have the highest opinion of you.* Give me a little time——*prejudices are hard to conquer, and yet who knows——*Bless me! he's here.

Enter HAZARD.

Mrs. Wild. Mr. Hazard, I have pleaded hard for you, and promised much for you. You must now try the cause yourself.

Haz. I am indebted to you—all things succeed beyond your thought—pray give me a little opportunity with your kinswoman.

Mrs. Wild. I will withdraw. [Going.]

Pen. *Don't go without me cousin, you know I have business with you.*

Mrs. Wild. *And so has that gentleman, my dear; and he is in such haste, poor man! he can't stay: finish with him, and I'm at your service.* [Exit.]

Haz. I know not how to woo her——
Sweet lady——

Pen. Your pleasure, sir?

Haz. Pray, let me ask you a question——
If you had lost your way, and met one,

A traveller like myself, that knew the coast
O th' country, would you thank him to direct you ?

Pen. That common manners would instruct.

Haz. I think so.

Pen. But there are many ways to the wood.

Haz. And which

Would you desire ; the nearest path and safest,
Or that wick leads about ?

Pen. Without all question

The nearest and safest.

Haz. Can you love then ?

Pen. *That is the nearest indeed. If you are upon that road, I could wish you would go a little about.*

Haz. *No, no, madam ; you have said, and I must have an answer.*

Pen. *You are in a violent hurry, sure. What answer would you have, sir ?*

Haz. *A direct one. Can you love ?*

Pen. *Pray give me a little time.*

Haz. *Not a moment. Can you love, I say ?*

Pen. I were a devil else.

Haz. And can you love a man ?

Pen. *Bless me ! you frighten me out of my wits. What did you say, sir ?*

Haz. *Can you love a man ?*

Pen. A man ! what else, sir !

Haz. *Y' are so far on your way. Now love but me, Y' are at your journey's end ; what say you to me ?*

Pen. Nothing, sir.

Haz. That's no answer ; you must say something.

Pen. *I wish you'd guess, and not compel me to speak.*

Haz. D'y' hear, lady?

Setting this foolery aside, I know

You cannot choose but love me.

Pen. Why?

Haz. I have been told so.

Pen. You are easy of belief ;

I think I should be best acquainted with

My own thoughts, and I dare not be so desperate

To conclude.

Haz. Come, come ; y'are a dissembling gentlewoman.

I know your heart ; you have lov'd me a great while.

What should I play the fool for ? If you remember,

I urg'd some wild discourse in the behalf

Of Barnacle ; it was a trial of thee ;

That humour made me love thee ; and since that, thy virtue.

Pen. Indeed, sir ?

Haz. Indeed, sir ? why, I have been contracted to thee.

Pen. *The deuce you have!* How long ?

Haz. This half hour ; know thy portion, and shall have it.

Pen. Strange!

Haz. Nay, I'll have thee too.

Pen. You will ? *How can I help myself?*

Haz. You cannot help it ; thy kind cousin will have it so :

'Tis his own plot, to make thee amends ; is't not
Good mirth ? but 'tis not love to thee or me ;
But to have me possess he is no cuckold :
I see through his device, thou art much beholden to
him :

He meant to have put thee off with half thy portion ;
But that, as things have happen'd, we must keep
secret.

Say, is't a match ? I have ten thousand pounds too,
" Thank the dice !" let's put our stocks together.
We have love enough—happiness must follow.

Pen. Pray, stop, sir, we're at our journey's end.
My guardian's here.

Enter WILDING.

Wild. So close ! I'm glad on't. This prepares Will
Hazard,

And my young cousin. A word, Penelope.

Haz. Now will he make all sure.

Wild. You us'd me coarsely,

But I have forgot it. What discourse have you
With this gentleman ?

Pen. *Very strange discourse.* He seems to be a suitor.

Wild. Entertain him, d' y' hear ; you may do worse ;
Be rul'd.

'Twas in my thought to move it ; does he not
Talk strangely ?

Pen. I told you he did.

Wild. *Was that all ?*

Pen. *What ?*

Wild. Nothing. Let me counsel you
To love him; call him husband.

Pen. I resolve
Never to marry without your consent, *since I have got*
my own. [Aside.] [They talk apart.]

Enter ACRELESS, LITTLESTOCK, *and* SELLAWAY.

Haz. Gentlemen, welcome.

Pen. If you bestow me, sir, I will be confident
I am not lost; I must confess I love him.

Wild. No more then; lose no time. Kind gentlemen,

Y^e are come most seasonably to be the witnesses
Of my consent. I have examin'd both
Your hearts, and freely give thee here my kinswoman:
No sooner shall the church pronounce
You married, but challenge what is hers.

Haz. Ten thousand pound.

Wild. I do confess it is her portion.
You sha'not stay to talk. Nay, gentlemen,
Pray see the business finish'd.

Acr. We'll attend him.

Wild. The lawyer with his papers are within;
I've sign'd and seal'd the contract, and with it
Give up all my right and guardianship
To this my friend. [To Haz.]

Haz. Which I with joy accept of——

Pen. And I for better and for worse.

Haz. Sweet Penelope, [Takes Pen. hand.
Be you the witness. [Exit with Pen.]

Wild. So, so ; this will confirm him in the opinion,
Penelope was the creature he enjoyed,
And keep off all suspicion of my wife,
Who is still honest, in the imagination
That only I embrac'd her : all's secure,
And my brow's smooth again. Who can deride me,
But I myself ? Ha ! that's too much ; I know it ;
And spite of these tricks, am a Cornelius.
Cannot I bribe my conscience to be ignorant ?
Why then I ha' done nothing : yes, advanc'd
The man, that grafted shame upon my forehead :
Vexation ! parted with ten thousand pound,
And am no less a cuckold than before !
Was I predestin'd to this shame and mockery ?
Where were my brains ? Yet why am I impatient ?
Unless betray'd, he cannot reach the knowledge ;
And then no matter——yes, I am curst again :
My torment multiplies ; Penelope
Will clear herself, and then that ruins all !
I would she had been strumpeted. I am lost,
And must be desperate——Kill him ? No——my wife.
Not so good——death is over black and horrid ;
And I am grown ridiculous to myself.
I must do something.

Enter BARNACLE and Nephew.

Barn. Master Wilding, welcome—I have not seen you a great while.

Wild. Then I have been happy a great while.
Do you know me ?

Barn. Know you ?

Wild. They say I am much alter'd of late.

Barn. There is some alteration in your forehead.

Wild. My forehead !

Barn. 'Tis not smooth enough—you're troubled—
Is your wife within ?

Wild. What would you with her ?

Barn. I know the matter that's a brewing.

Neph. *Et ego.*

Barn. You have it here, Mr. Wilding.

[*Pointing to his head.*]

Wild. The devil !——Do you see 'em ?
Have they broke the surface ?

Barn. I mean Mr. Hazard's business.

Wild. I mean that too. My head's a torment to me.

Neph. What would you give now, Mr. Wilding, to
be of the nation without heads ?

Wild. Would I could change conditions with these
fools ; they are not now troubled with being cuckolds.

Enter Mrs. WILDING.

Mrs. Wild. Gentlemen, your servant.

Barn. Joy, joy to you, Mrs. Wilding.

Wild. Wife, you are a whore ; you shall know
more hereafter—I must go live in the forest.

Mrs. Wild. And I i' th' common.

Wild. She'll turn prostitute !

Enter HAZARD, PENELOPE, ACRELESS, &c.

Haz. Your leave, gentlefolks ; who wishes us joy !

Barn. Married?

Haz. Fast as the law can tie us;
The priest must bless the knot.

Acr. We are witnesses.

Haz. Cousin, ten thousand pound; and lady, now
I must thank you for this among the rest. Look then
with an eye of love upon me.

Wild. No matter, she'll love thee afterwards. An'
she do not, she can but cuckold thee; there be more
i' th' parish, man.

Mrs. Wild. In our parish, husband?

Wild. I'll be divorc'd now.
Wife, you're a whore.

Haz. Ho, there! no big words; come,
We must tell something in your ear: be merry;
You are no cuckold, make no noise. I know
That's it offends your stomach.

Wild. Ha!

Haz. I touch'd not her, nor this, with one rude action.
We'll talk the circumstance another time:
Your wife expected you; but 'when I came,
She had prepar'd a light, and her cousin here,
T' have made you blush, and chide you into honesty;
Seeing their chaste simplicity, I was won
To silence, which brought on my better fortune.

Wild. Can this be real?

Mrs. Wild. By my hopes of peace
I' th' t'other world, you have no injury:
My plot was only to betray you to
Love and repentance.

Pen. Be not troubled, sir ;
I am a witness of my cousin's truth ;
And hope you'll make all prosper, in renewing
Your faith to her.

Haz. Be wise, and no more words :
Thou hast a treasure in thy wife ; make much of her.
For any act of mine, she is as chaste
As when she was new-born. Love, love her, Jack.

Wild. I am asham'd : pray give me all forgiveness.
I see my follies—Heaven invites me gently
To thy chaste bed. Be thou again my dearest :
Thy virtue shall instruct me. Joy to all.

Haz. These be love's miracles : a spring-tide flow
in every bosom.

Barn. May ease, health, happiness attend you, lady.

Pen. From you, sir, 'tis a double compliment.
Have I your pardon, sir, for my refusal of the honour
of your nephew's hand ?

Barn. You have.

Neph. And mine too, lady, with thanks to the bar-
gain.

Wild. To-day I'll feast you all ; and, wife, be this
our bridal day : let us begin new joys with these our
happy cousins.

Mrs. Wild. My joys are at their full ; and, dear Pe-
nelope, my heart o'erflows with love, delight, and
gratitude.

Pen. May I deserve your friendship, and follow
your example.

Haz. Be witness, gentlemen, that wedded here,

wedded for ever, I no more shall follow that fickle harlot Fortune—I renounce my follies; fly to peace, content, and love.

*From riot, care, intemperance, and vice;
And from the fountain head of all—the dice.*

Sell. The sinner preaches, Wilding; but his lectures will make few penitents.

Wild. I'm sorry for't——

I own myself a convert to these truths,
And wish that you had felt 'em. This my pilot,
My prudent pilot, steers me safe thro' storms,
Thro' rocks and quicksands, to a happier coast:

*The syren's voice shall charm my ear no more;
With joy I quit that treach'rous, fatal shore;
Where a friend's ruin is by friends enjoy'd,
And ev'ry virtue is by turns destroy'd.*

[Exeunt omnes.]



EPILOGUE.

WRITTEN BY A FRIEND, AND SPOKEN BY MRS.
WILDING.

*My conduct now will every mind employ,
And all my friends, I'm sure, will wish me joy :
'Tis joy indeed, and fairly worth the cost,
To've gain'd the wand'ring heart I once had lost.
Hold, says the prudish dame, with scornful sneer,
I must, sweet madam, stop your high career ;
Where was your pride, your decency, your sense,
To keep your husband in that strange suspense ?
For my part, I abominate these scenes——
No ends compensate for such odious means :
To me, I'm sure—but 'tis not fit to utter——
The very thought has put me in a flutter !*

*Odious, says Miss, of quick and forward parts ;
Had she done more, she'd given him his deserts :
O, had the wretch but been a spark of mine,
By Jove, I should have paid him in his coin.*

*Another critic ventures to declare,
She thinks that cousin Pen has gone too far :
Nay, surely, she has play'd a gen'rous part ;
A fair dissembler, with an honest heart.
Would any courtly dame in such a case,
Solicit, get, and then resign the place ?*

*She knew, good girl, my husband's reformation,
Was (what you'll scarce believe) my only passion :
And when your scheme is good, and smart, and clever,
Cousins have been convenient persons ever.
With all your wisdom, madam, cries a wit,
Had Pen been false, you had been fairly bit :
'Twas dangerous, sure, to tempt her youth with sin ;
The knowing ones are often taken in.
The truly good ne'er treat with indignation
A natural, unaffected, generous passion ;
But with an open, liberal praise, commend
Those means which gain'd the honourable end.*

*Ye beauteous, happy fair, who know to bless,
Warm'd by a mutual flame, this truth confess ;
That should we every various pleasure prove,
There's nothing like the heart of him we love.*

THE END.

A
BOLD STROKE FOR A WIFE.

A
COMEDY,
BY MRS. CENTLIVRE.

ADAPTED FOR
THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,
AS PERFORMED AT THE
THEATRES-ROYAL,
DRURY-LANE AND COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS,

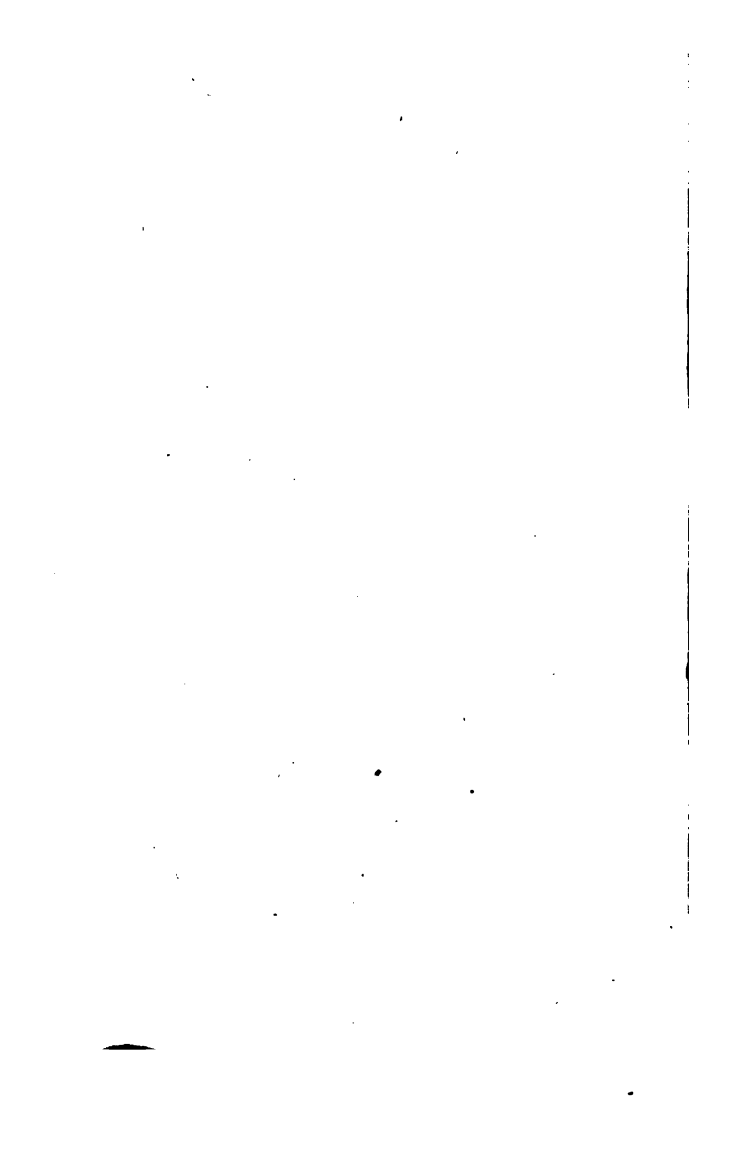
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MDCXCXI.



TO
HIS GRACE,
PHILIP,
DUKE AND MARQUIS OF WHARTON, &c.

MY LORD,

IT has ever been the custom of poets, to shelter productions of this nature under the patronage of the brightest men of their time; and 'tis observed, that the muses always met the kindest reception from persons of the greatest merit. The world will do me justice as to the choice of my patron; but will, I fear, blame my rash attempt, in daring to address your Grace, and offer at a work too difficult for our ablest pens, viz. an encomium on your Grace. I have no plea against such reflections, but the disadvantage of education, and the privilege of my sex.

If your Grace discovers a genius so surprising in this dawn of life, what must your riper years produce! Your Grace has already been distinguished in a most peculiar manner, being the first young nobleman that ever was admitted into a house of peers before he reached the age of one and twenty: but your Grace's judgment and eloquence soon convinced that august assembly, that the excellent gifts of na-

ture ought not to be confined to time. *We hope the example that Ireland has set, will shortly be followed by an English house of lords, and your Grace made a member of that body, to which you will be so conspicuous an ornament.*

Your good sense, and real love for your country, taught your Grace to persevere in the principles of your glorious ancestors, by adhering to the defender of our religion and laws; and the penetrating wisdom of your royal master saw you merited your honours ere he conferred them. It is one of the greatest glories of a monarch to distinguish where to bestow his favours; and the world must do ours justice, by owning your Grace's titles most deservedly worn.

It is with the greatest pleasure imaginable, the friends of liberty see you pursuing the steps of your noble father: your courteous affable temper, free from pride and ostentation, makes your name adored in the country, and enables your Grace to carry what point you please. The late Lord Wharton will be still remembered by every lover of his country, which never felt a greater shock than what his death occasioned: their grief had been inconsolable, if Heaven, out of its wonted beneficence to this favourite isle, had not transmitted all his shining qualities to you, and phoenix-like, raised up one patriot out of the ashes of another.

That your Grace has a high esteem for learning, particularly appears by the large progress you made therein: and your love for the muses shews a sweetness of temper, and generous humanity, peculiar to the greatness of your soul; for such virtues reign not in the breast of every man of quality.

Defer no longer then, my lord, to charm the world with the beauty of your numbers, and shew the poet, as you have done the orator; convince our unthinking Britons, by what vile arts France lost her liberty; and teach them to avoid their own misfortunes, as well as to weep over Henry IV. who (if it were possible for him to know) would forgive the bold assassin's hand, for the honour of having his fall celebrated by your Grace's pen.

To be distinguished by persons of your Grace's character is not only the highest ambition, but the greatest reputation to an author; and it is not the least of my vanities, to have it known to the public, I had your Grace's leave to prefix your name to this comedy.

I wish I were capable to clothe the following scenes in such a dress as might be worthy to appear before your Grace, and draw your attention as much as your Grace's admirable qualifications do that of all man-

kind ; but the muses, like most females, are least liberal to their own sex.

All I dare say in favour of this piece, is, that the plot is entirely new, and the incidents wholly owing to my own invention ; not borrowed from our own, or translated from the works of any foreign poet ; so that they have at least the charm of novelty to recommend them. If they are so lucky, in some leisure hour, to give your Grace the least diversion, they will answer the utmost ambition of,

My Lord,

Your Grace's most obedient, most devoted, and

Most humble servant,

SUSANNA CENTLIVRE.

A BOLD STROKE FOR A WIFE.

THIS is the play of a lady, whose productions we have before had occasion to notice generally. It seems to be such a kind of work, as any woman fertile in expedient might conceive, and any woman, conversant with language in a slight degree, might write.

It has no scenes of wit that demanded vivacity of intelligence to collect, and a mind skilled and exercised in remote resemblances to combine. Humour it has, but it is of the coarsest kind—not over delicate, nor exceedingly chaste.

One peculiarity strikes us in the comedy of female writers: it is, that their heroines are never to be won without stratagem. They invariably display the romantic cast of the sex, in such redundancy of disguises and surprises, such conjurations of the lover, and such caprices of the mistress—so much inexorable folly in her guardian, or such blindness in her parents, such readiness of lying in the lady, and so much dexterity of contrivance in her maid.

Mrs. APHRA BEHN appears to have begun this loose comedy among us; which some of our present writers seem about to finish—We assure them they are heartily welcome, for all that either present or future readers will care.

PROLOGUE.

*To night we come upon a bold design,
To try to please without one borrow'd line ;
Our plot is new and regularly clear,
And not one single tittle from Moliere.
O'er buried poets we with caution tread,
And parish sextons leave to rob the dead.
For you, bright British fair, in hopes to charm ye,
We bring to-night a lover from the army ;
You know the soldiers have the strangest arts,
Such a proportion of prevailing parts,
You'd think that they rid post to women's hearts.
I wonder whence they draw their bold pretence ;
We do not choose them sure for our defence :
That plea is both impolitic and wrong,
And only suit such dames as want a tongue.
Is it their eloquence and fine address ?
The softness of their language ?——Nothing less.
Is it their courage, that they bravely dare
To storm the sex at once ?——Egad ! 'tis there,
They act by us as in the rough campaign,
Unmindful of repulses, charge again :
They mine and countermine, resolv'd to win,
And, if a breach is made,—they will come in.*

*You'll think, by what we have of soldiers said,
Our female wit was in the service bred :
But she is to the hardy toil a stranger,
She loves the cloth indeed, but hates the danger :
Yet to this circle of the brave and gay,
She bid one, for her good intentions say,
She hopes you'll not reduce her to half-pay.
As for our play, 'tis English humour all :
Then will you let our manufecture fall ?
Would you the honour of our nation raise,
Keep English credit up, and English plays.*

Dramatis Personæ.

DRURY - LANE.

Men.

Colonel FAINWELL, in love with Mrs. Lovely	Mr. Palmer.
Sir PHILIP MODELOVE, an old beau - -	Mr. Baddeley.
PERIWINKLE, a kind of silly virtuoso - -	Mr. Parsons.
TRADELOVE, a Change broker - -	Mr. Faucett.
OBADIAH PRIM, a Quaker bosier - -	Mr. Moody.
FREEMAN, the Colonel's friend, a merchant	Mr. Barrymore.
SIMON PURE, a Quaking preacher - -	Mr. Burton.
Mr. SACKBUT, a vintner - -	Mr. Phillimore.

Women.

Mrs. LOVELY, a fortune of thirty thousand } pounds - -	Miss Farren.
Mrs. PRIM, wife to Prim the bosier - -	Mrs. Love.
BETTY, servant to Mrs. Lovely. - -	Miss Tidswell.

COVENT-GARDEN.

Men.

Colonel FAINWELL, in love with Mrs. Lovely	Mr. Ryder.
Sir PHILIP MODELOVE, an old beau - -	Mr. Bernard.
PERIWINKLE, a kind of silly virtuoso - -	Mr. Quick.
TRADELOVE, a Change broker - -	Mr. Thompson.
OBADIAH PRIM, a Quaker bosier - -	Mr. Booth.
FREEMAN, the Colonel's friend, a merchant	Mr. Davies.
SIMON PURE, a Quaking preacher - -	Mr. Blanchard.
Mr. SACKBUT, a vintner - -	Mr. Fearon.

Women.

Mrs. LOVELY, a fortune of thirty thousand } pounds - -	Mrs. Wells.
Mrs. PRIM, wife to Prim the bosier - -	Mrs. Pitt.
BETTY, servant to Mrs. Lovely - -	Mrs. Davenett.



A

BOLD STROKE FOR A WIFE.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A Tavern. Colonel FAINWELL and FREEMAN over a Bottle.

Freeman.

COME, colonel, his majesty's health.—You are as melancholy as if you were in love! I wish some of the beauties of Bath ha'n't snapt your heart.

Col. Why, faith, Freeman, there is something in't; I have seen a lady at Bath, who has kindled such a flame in me, that all the waters there can't quench.

Free. Women, like some poisonous animals, carry their antidote about 'em——Is she not to be had, colonel?

Col. That's a difficult question to answer; however, I resolve to try: perhaps you may be able to serve me; you merchants know one another.—The

lady told me herself she was under the charge of four persons.

Free. Odso! 'tis Mrs. Anne Lovely.

Col. The same—Do you know her?

Free. Know her! ay,—Faith, colonel, your condition is more desperate than you imagine: why, she is the talk and pity of the whole town; and it is the opinion of the learned that she must die a maid.

Col. Say you so? That's somewhat odd, in this charitable city.—She's a woman, I hope?

Free. For aught I know,—but it had been as well for her, had nature made her any other part of the creation. The man who keeps this house serv'd her father; he is a very honest fellow, and may be of use to you; we'll send for him to take a glass with us: he'll give you her whole history, and 'tis worth your hearing.

Col. But may one trust him?

Free. With your life: I have obligations enough upon him to make him do any thing: I serve him with wine. [Knocks.]

Col. Nay, I know him very well myself. I once used to frequent a club that was kept here.

Enter Drawer.

Draw. Gentlemen, d'ye call?

Free. Ay; send up your master.

Draw. Yes, sir. [Exit.]

Col. Do you know any of this lady's guardians, Freeman?

Free. Yes, I know two of them very well.

Enter SACKBUT.

Free. Here comes one will give you an account of them all.—Mr. Sackbut, we sent for you to take a glass with us. 'Tis a maxim among the friends of the bottle, that as long as the master is in company, one may be sure of good wine.

Sack. Sir, you shall be sure to have as good wine as you send in.—Colonel, your most humble servant; you are welcome to town.

Col. I thank you, Mr. Sackbut.

Sack. I am as glad to see you as I should a hundred tun of French claret custom free.—My service to you, sir, [*Drinks.*] You don't look so merry as you used to do; ar'n't you well, colonel?

Free. He has got a woman in his head, landlord, can you help him?

Sack. If 'tis in my power, I shan't scruple to serve my friend.

Col. 'Tis one perquisite of your calling.

Sack. Ay, at t'other end of the town, where you officers use, women are good forcers of trade; a well-custom'd house, a handsome bar-keeper, with clean obliging drawers, soon get the master an estate; but our citizens seldom do any thing but cheat within the walls.—But as to the lady, colonel, point you at particulars? or have you a good Champagne stomach? Are you in full pay, or reduc'd, colonel?

Col. Reduc'd, reduc'd, landlord.

Free. To the miserable condition of a lover!

Sack. Pish! that's preferable to half-pay; a woman's resolution may break before the peace: push her home, colonel, there's no parlying with the fair sex.

Col. Were the lady her own mistress, I have some reasons to believe I should soon command in chief.

Free. You know Mrs. Lovely, Mr. Sackbut?

Sack. Know her! Ay, poor Nancy: I have carried her to school many a frosty morning. Alas! if she's the woman, I pity you, colonel: her father, my old master, was the most whimsical out-of-the-way temper'd man I ever heard of, as you will guess by his last will and testament.—This was his only child: and I have heard him wish her dead a thousand times.

Col. Why so?

Sack. He hated posterity, you must know, and wish'd the world were to expire with himself.—He used to swear, if she had been a boy, he would have qualified him for the opera.

Free. 'Twas a very unnatural resolution in a father.

Sack. He died worth thirty thousand pounds, which he left to his daughter, provided she married with the consent of her guardian but that she might be sure never to do so, he left her in the care of four men, as opposite to each other as the four elements; each has his quarterly rule, and three months in a year she is oblig'd to be subject to each of their humours, and

they are pretty different, I assure you.—She is just come from Bath.

Col. 'Twas there I saw her.

Sack. Ay, sir, the last quarter was her beau guardian's.—She appears in all public places during his reign.

Col. She visited a lady who boarded in the same house with me: I liked her person, and found an opportunity to tell her so. She replied, she had no objection to mine; but if I could not reconcile contradictions, I must not think of her, for that she was condemned to the caprice of four persons, who never yet agreed in any one thing, and she was obliged to please them all.

Sack. 'Tis most true, sir; I'll give you a short description of the men, and leave you to judge of the poor lady's condition. One is a kind of virtuoso, a silly half-witted fellow, but positive and surly, fond of every thing antique and foreign, and wears his clothes of the fashion of the last century; doats upon travellers, and believes more of Sir John Mandeville than he does of the Bible.

Col. That must be a rare odd fellow!

Sack. Another is a 'Change-broker; a fellow that will out-lye the devil for the advantage of stock, and cheat his father that got him, in a bargain: he is a great stickler for trade, and hates every man that wears a sword.

Free. He is a great admirer of the Dutch manage-

ment, and swears they understand trade better than any nation under the sun.

Sack. The third is an old beau, that has May in his fancy and dress, but December in his face and his heels: he admires all the new fashions, and those must be French; loves operas, balls, masquerades, and is always the most tawdry of the whole company on a birth-day.

Col. These are pretty opposite to one another, truly; and the fourth, what is he, landlord?

Sack. A very rigid quaker, whose quarter began this day.—I saw Mrs. Lovely go in, not above two hours ago,—Sir Philip set her down. What think you now, colonel, is not the poor lady to be pitied?

Col. Ay, and rescu'd too, landlord.

Free. In my opinion that's impossible.

Col. There is nothing impossible to a lover. What would not a man attempt for a fine woman and thirty thousand pounds? Besides, my honour is at stake; I promised to deliver her, and she bid me win her and wear her.

Sack. That's fair, faith.

Free. If it depended upon knight-errantry, I should not doubt your setting free the damsel; but to have avarice, impertinence, hypocrisy, and pride, at once to deal with, requires more cunning than generally attends a man of honour.

Col. My fancy tells me I shall come off with glory.

I am resolved to try, however.—Do you know all the guardians, Mr. Sackbut ?

Sack. Very well, sir ; they all use my house.

Col. And will you assist me, if occasion requires ?

Sack. In every thing I can, colonel.

Free. I'll answer for him ; and whatever I can serve you in, you may depend on. I know Mr. Periwinkle and Mr. Tradelove ; the latter has a very great opinion of my interest abroad.—I happen'd to have a letter from a correspondent two hours before the news arriv'd of the French king's death : I communicated it to him : upon which he bought all the stock he could, and what with that, and some wagers he laid, he told me he had got to the tune of five hundred pounds ; so that I am much in his good graces.

Col. I don't know but you may be of service to me, Freeman.

Free. If I can, command me, colonel.

Col. Isn't it possible to find a suit of clothes ready made at some of these sale-shops fit to rig out a beau, think you, Mr. Sackbut ?

Sack. O hang 'em—No, colonel, they keep nothing ready made that a gentleman would be seen in : but I can fit you with a suit of clothes, if you'd make a figure.—Velvet and gold brocade—They were pawn'd to me by a French Count, who had been stript at play, and wanted money to carry him home ; he promised to send for them, but I have not heard any thing of him.

Free. He has not fed upon frogs long enough yet to recover his loss ; ha, ha !

Col. Ha, ha ! Well, the clothes will do Mr. Sackbut,—tho' we must have three or four fellows in tawdry liveries : they can be procur'd, I hope.

Free. Egad ! I have a brother come from the West-Indies that can match you ; and, for expedition-sake, you shall have his servants : there's a black, a tawney-moor, and a Frenchman ; they don't speak one word of English, so can make no mistake.

Col. Excellent !—Egad ! I shall look like an Indian prince. First, I'll attack my beau guardian ; where lives he ?

Sack. Faith, somewhere about St. James's ; tho' to say in what street I cannot ; but any chairman will tell you where Sir Philip Modelove lives.

Free. Oh ! you'll find him in the Park at eleven every day ; at least, I never pass thro' at that hour without seeing him there.—But what do you intend ?

Col. To address him in his own way, and find what he designs to do with the lady.

Free. And what then ?

Col. Nay, that I can't tell ; but I shall take my measures accordingly.

Sack. Well, 'tis a mad undertaking in my mind : but here's to your success, colonel. [*Drinks.*]

Col. 'Tis something out of the way, I confess ; but fortune may chance to smile, and I succeed.—Come, landlord, let me see those clothes. Freeman, I shall expect you'll leave word with Mr. Sackbut where one

may find you upon occasion ; and send me my Indian equipage immediately, d'ye hear ?

Free. Immediately.

[Exit.

Col. *Bold was the man who ventur'd first to sea,
But the first vent'ring lovers bolder were.*

The path of love's a dark and dang'rous way,

Without a landmark, or one friendly star,

And he that runs the risque deserves the fair.

[Exit.

SCENE II.

PRIM's House. Enter Mrs. LOVELY and her Maid
BETTY.

Betty. Bless me, madam ! Why do you fret and tease yourself so ? This is giving them the advantage with a witness.

Mrs. Lov. Must I be condemned all my life to the preposterous humours of other people, and pointed at by every boy in town ?—Oh ! I could tear my flesh, and curse the hour I was born—Isn't it monstrously ridiculous, that they should desire to impose their Quaking dress upon me at these years ? When I was a child, no matter what they made me wear, but now——

Betty. I would resolve against it, madam ; I'd see 'em hang'd before I'd put on the pinch'd cap again.

Mrs. Lov. Then I must never expect one moment's ease : she has rung such a peal in my ears already,

that I sha'n't have the right use of them this month.
—What can I do ?

Betty. What can you *not* do, if you will but give your mind to it ? *Marry*, madam.

Mrs. Lov. What ! and have my fortune go to build churches and hospitals ?

Betty. Why, let it go. —If the colonel loves you, as he pretends, he'll marry you without a fortune, madam ; and I assure you a colonel's lady is no despicable thing ; a colonel's post will maintain you like a gentlewoman, madam.

Mrs. Lov. So you would advise me to give up my own fortune, and throw myself upon the colonel's.

Betty. I would advise you to make yourself easy, madam.

Mrs. Lov. That's not the way, I'm sure. No, no, girl, there are certain ingredients to be mingled with matrimony, without which I may as well change for the worse as the better. When the woman has fortune enough to make the man happy, if he has either honour or good manners, he'll make her easy. Love makes but a slovenly figure in a house, where poverty keeps the door.

Betty. And so you resolve to die a maid, do you, madam ?

Mrs. Lov. Or have it in my power to make the man I love master of my fortune.

Betty. Then you don't like the colonel so well as I thought you did, madam, or you would not take such a resolution.

Mrs. Lov. It is because I do like him, Betty, that I do take such a resolution.

Betty. Why, do you expect, madam, the colonel can work miracles? Is it possible for him to marry you with the consent of all your guardians?

Mrs. Lov. Or he must not marry me at all: and so I told him; and he did not seem displeased with the news.—He promised to set me free; and I, on that condition, promised to make him master of that freedom.

Betty. Well! I have read of enchanted castles, ladies delivered from the chains of magic, giants kill'd, and monsters overcome; so that I shall be the less surprised if the colonel should conjure you out of the power of your four guardians; if he does, I am sure he deserves your fortune.

Mrs. Lov. And shall have it, girl, if it were ten times as much—For I'll ingenuously confess to thee, that I do like the colonel above all the men I ever saw:—There's something so *jantée* in a soldier, a kind of *je-ne-sçai-quoi* air, that makes them more agreeable than the rest of mankind.—They command regard, as who shall say, We are your defenders. We preserve your beauties from the insults of rude and unpolish'd foes, and ought to be preferr'd before those lazy indolent mortals, who, by dropping into their fathers' estates, set up their coaches, and think to rattle themselves into our affections.

Betty. Nay, madam, I confess that the army has

engrossed all the prettiest fellows—A laced coat and a feather have irresistible charms.

Mrs. Lov. But the colonel has all the beauties of the mind as well as the body.—O all ye powers that favour happy lovers, grant that he may be mine! Thou god of love, if thou be'st aught but name, assist my Fainwell!

Point all thy darts to aid his just design,

And make his plots as prevalent as thine. [Exit.]

I.

ACT II. SCENE I.

The Park. Enter Colonel finely drest, three Footmen after him.

Colonel.

So, now if I can but meet this beau!—Egad! methinks, I cut a smart figure, and have as much of the tawdry air as any Italian Count or French Marquée of them all.—Sure I shall know this knight again—Ah! yonder he sits, making love to a mask, i'faith. I'll walk up the Mall, and come down by him. [Exit.]

Scene draws, and discovers Sir PHILIP upon a Bench, with a Woman mask'd.

Sir Phil. Well, but, my dear, are you really constant to your keeper?

Wom. Yes, really, sir.—Hey-day! Who comes yonder? He cuts a mighty figure.

Sir Phil. Ha! a stranger, by his equipage keeping so close at his heels.—He has the appearance of a man of quality.—Positively French, by his dancing air.

Wom. He crosses, as if he meant to sit down here.

Sir Phil. He has a mind to make love to thee, child.

Enter Colonel, and seats himself upon the Bench by Sir PHILIP.

Wom. It will be to no purpose if he does.

Sir Phil. Are you resolved to be cruel then?

Col. You must be very cruel indeed, if you can deny any thing to so fine a gentleman, madam.

[Takes out his Watch.

Wom. I never mind the outside of a man.

Col. And I'm afraid thou art no judge of the inside.

Sir Phil. I am positively of your mind, sir, for creatures of her function seldom penetrate beyond the pocket.

Wom. Creatures of your composition have, indeed, generally more in their pockets than in their heads.

[Aside.

Sir Phil. Pray what says your watch? mine is down.

[Pulling out his Watch.

Col. I want thirty-six minutes of twelve, sir.—

[Puts up his Watch, and takes out his Snuff-box.

Sir Phil. May I presume, sir?

Col. Sir, you honour me. *[Presenting the Box.*

Sir Phil. He speaks good English—tho' he must be a foreigner. *[Aside.]*—This snuff is extremely good,

—and the box prodigious fine; the work is French, I presume, sir.

Col. I bought it in Paris, sir—I do think the workmanship pretty neat.

Sir Phil. Neat! 'tis exquisitely fine, sir. Pray, sir, if I may take the liberty of enquiring—What country is so happy to claim the birth of the finest gentleman in the universe? France, I presume.

Col. Then you don't think me an Englishman?

Sir Phil. No, upon my soul, don't I.

Col. I am sorry for't.

Sir Phil. Impossible you should wish to be an Englishman! Pardon me, sir, this island could not produce a person of such alertness.

Col. As this mirror shews you, sir.

[*Puts up a Pocket Glass to Sir Philip's Face.*]

Wom. Coxcombs! I'm sick to hear them praise one another. One seldom gets any thing by such animals; not even a dinner, unless one can dine upon soup and celery.

Sir Phil. O Gad, sir?—Will you leave us, madam? Ha, ha!

[*Exit Wom.*]

Col. She fears 'twill be only losing time to stay here, ha, ha!—I know not how to distinguish you, sir, but your mien and address speak you right honourable.

Sir Phil. Thus great souls judge of others by themselves—I am only adorn'd with knighthood, that's all, I assure you, sir; my name is Sir Philip Mode-love.

Col. Of French extraction?

Sir Phil. My father was French.

Col. One may plainly perceive it—There is a certain gaiety peculiar to my nation (for I will own myself a Frenchman) which distinguishes us every where—A person of your figure would be a vast addition to a coronet.

Sir Phil. I must own I had the offer of a barony about five years ago, but I abhor'd the fatigue which must have attended it. I could never yet bring myself to join with either party.

Col. You are perfectly in the right, Sir Philip,—a fine person should not embark himself in the slovenly concern of politics: dress and pleasure are objects proper for the soul of a fine gentleman.

Sir Phil. And love——

Col. Oh! that's included under the article of pleasure.

Sir Phil. *Parbleu il est un homme d'esprit.* I must embrace you—[*Rises and embraces.*—Your sentiments are so agreeable to mine, that we appear to have but one soul, for our ideas and conceptions are the same.

Col. I should be sorry for that. [*Aside.*—You do me too much honour, Sir Philip.

Sir Phil. Your vivacity and *jantée* mien assured me, at first sight, there was nothing of this foggy island in your composition. May I crave your name, sir?

Col. My name is La Fainwell, sir, at your service.

Sir Phil. The La Fainwells are French, I know; tho' the name is become very numerous in Great-

Britain of late years—I was sure you was French the moment I laid my eyes upon you; I could not come into the supposition of your being an Englishman: this island produces few such ornaments.

Col. Pardon me, Sir Philip, this island has two things superior to all nations under the sun.

Sir Phil. Ah! what are they?

Col. The ladies, and the laws.

Sir Phil. The laws indeed, do claim a preference of other nations,—but, by my soul, there are fine women every where.—I must own I have felt their power in all countries.

Col. There are some finish'd beauties, I confess, in France, Italy, Germany, nay, even in Holland, *mais elles sont bien rare*: but *les belles Angloises*! Oh, Sir Philip, where find we such women! such symmetry of shape! such elegance of dress! such regularity of features! such sweetness of temper! such commanding eyes! and such bewitching smiles!

Sir Phil. Ah! *parbleu vous etes attrapé*.

Col. *Non, je vous assure, Chevalier*.—But I declare there is no amusement so agreeable to my *goût* as the conversation of a fine woman.—I could never be prevailed upon to enter into what the vulgar calls the pleasure of the bottle.

Sir Phil. My own taste, *positivement*.—A ball, or a masquerade, is certainly preferable to all the productions of the vineyard.

Col. Infinitely! I hope the people of quality in England will support that branch of pleasure, which

was imported with their peace, and since naturaliz'd by the ingenious Mr. Heidegger.

Sir Phil. The ladies assure me it will become part of the constitution—upon which I subscrib'd a hundred guineas—It will be of great service to the public, at least to the company of surgeons; and the city in general.

Col. Ha, ha! it may help to ennoble the blood of the city. Are you married, Sir Philip?

Sir Phil. No; nor do I believe I ever shall enter into that honourable state: I have an absolute *tendre* for the whole sex.

Col. That's more than they have for you, I dare swear. [Aside.

Sir Phil. And I have the honour to be very well with the ladies, I can assure you, sir; and I won't affront a million of fine women to make one happy.

Col. Nay, marriage is reducing a man's taste to a kind of half pleasure: but then it carries the blessing of peace along with it; one goes to sleep without fear, and wakes without pain.

Sir Phil. There's something of that in't; a wife is a very good dish for an English stomach,—but gross feeding for nicer palates, ha, ha, ha!

Col. I find I was very much mistaken,—I imagined you had been married to that young lady, whom I saw in the chariot with you this morning in Gracechurch-Street.

Sir Phil. Who, Nancy Lovely? I am a piece of a guardian to that lady: you must know, her father,

I thank him, joined me with three of the most preposterous old fellows—that, upon my soul, I am in pain for the poor girl;—she must certainly lead apes, as the saying is; ha, ha!

Col. That's pity, Sir Philip. If the lady would give me leave, I would endeavour to avert that curse.

Sir Phil. As to the lady, she'd gladly be rid of us at any rate, I believe; but here's the mischief, he who marries Miss Lovely, must have the consent of us all four,—or not a penny of her portion.—For my part, I shall never approve of any but a man of figure,—and the rest are not only averse to cleanliness, but have each a peculiar taste to gratify.—For my part, I declare I would prefer you to all the men I ever saw.

Col. And I her to all women——

Sir Phil. I assure you, Mr. Fainwell, I am for marrying her, for I hate the trouble of a guardian, especially among such wretches; but resolve never to agree to the choice of any one of them,—and I fancy they'll be even with me, for they never came into any proposal of mine yet.

Col. I wish I had your leave to try ~~them~~, Sir Philip.

Sir Phil. With all my soul, sir, I can refuse a person of your appearance nothing.

Col. Sir, I am infinitely obliged to you.

Sir Phil. But do you really like matrimony?

Col. I believe I could with that lady.

Sir Phil. The only point in which we differ—But you are master of so many qualifications, that I can

excuse one fault; for I must think it a fault in a fine gentleman; and that you are such, I'll give it under my hand.

Col. I wish you'd give me your consent to marry Mrs. Lovely under your hand, Sir Philip.

Sir Phil. I'll do't, if you'll step into St. James's Coffee-house, where we may have pen and ink;—tho' I can't foresee what advantage my consent will be to you, without you could find a way to get the rest of the guardians.—But I'll introduce you, however: she is now at a Quaker's, where I carried her this morning, when you saw us in Gracechurch-Street.—I assure you she has an odd *ragout* of guardians, as you will find when you hear the characters, which I'll endeavour to give you as we go along.—Hey! *Pierre, Jaque, Renno*,—where are you all, scoundrels?—Order the chariot to St. James's Coffee-house.

Col. *Le Noir, la Brun, la Blanc.*—*Morbleu, ou sont ces Coquins la? Allons, Monsieur le Chevalier.*

Sir Phil. Ah! *Pardonez moi, Monsieur.*

Col. Not one step, upon my soul, Sir Philip.

Sir Phil. The best bred man in Europe, positively.
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

Changes to OBADIAH PRIM's House. Enter Mrs. LOVELY, followed by Mrs. PRIM.

Mrs. Prim. Then thou wilt not obey me: and thou dost really think those fallals become thee?

Mrs. Lov. I do, indeed.

Mrs. Pr. Now will I be judged by all sober people, if I don't look more like a modest woman than thou dost, Anne.

Mrs. Lov. More like a hypocrite you mean, Mrs. Prim.

Mrs. Pr. Ah! Anne, Anne, that wicked Philip Modelove will undo thee,—Satan so fills thy heart with pride, during the three months of his guardianship, that thou becomest a stumbling block to the upright.

Mrs. Lov. Pray who are they? Are the pinch'd cap and formal hood the emblems of sanctity? Does your virtue consist in your dress, Mrs. Prim?

Mrs. Pr. It doth not consist in cut hair, spotted face, and a bare neck.—Oh the wickedness of the generation! The primitive women knew not the abomination of hoop'd petticoats.

Mrs. Lov. No, nor the abomination of cant neither. Don't tell me, Mrs. Prim, don't.—I know you have as much pride, vanity, self-conceit, and ambition among you, couched under that formal habit, and sanctified countenance, as the proudest of us all; but the world begins to see your prudery.

Mrs. Pr. Prudery! What! do they invent new words as well as new fashions? Ah! poor fantastic age, I pity thee—Poor deluded Anne, which dost thou think most resemblest the saint, and which the sinner, thy dress or mine? Thy naked bosom allureth the eye of the by-stander—encourageth the frailty of

human nature—and corrupteth the soul with evil longings.

Mrs. Lov. And pray who corrupted your son Tobias with evil longings? Your maid Tabitha wore a handkerchief, and yet he made the saint a sinner.

Mrs. Pr. Well, well, spit thy malice. I confess Satan did buffet my son Tobias, and my servant Tabitha; the evil spirit was at that time too strong, and they both became subject to its workings,—not from any outward provocation,—but from an inward call; he was not tainted with the rottenness of the fashions, nor did his eyes take in the drunkenness of beauty.

Mrs. Lov. No! that's plainly to be seen.

Mrs. Pr. Tabitha is one of the faithful; he fell not with a stranger.

Mrs. Lov. So! Then you hold wenching no crime, provided it be within the pale of your own tribe.—You are an excellent casuist, truly.

Enter OBADIAH PRIM.

Ob. Pr. Not stripp'd of thy vanity, yet, Anne!—Why dost thou not make her put it off, Sarah?

Mrs. Pr. She will not do it.

Ob. Pr. Verily, thy naked breasts troubleth my outward man; I pray thee hide 'em, Anne: put on an handkerchief, Anne Lovely.

Mrs. Lov. I hate handkerchiefs when 'tis not cold weather, Mr. Prim.

Mrs. Pr. I have seen thee wear a handkerchief; nay, and a mask to boot, in the middle of July.

Mrs. Lov. Ay, to keep the sun from scorching me.

Ob. Pr. If thou couldst not bear the sun-beams, how dost thou think man can bear thy beams? Those breasts inflame desire; let them be hid, I say.

Mrs. Lov. Let me be quiet, I say.—Must I be tormented thus for ever? Sure no woman's condition ever equalled mine! Foppery, folly, avarice and hypocrisy, are, by turns, my constant companions,—and I must vary shapes as often as a player—I cannot think my father meant this tyranny! No, you usurp an authority which he never intended you should take.

Ob. Pr. Hark thee, dost thou call good counsel tyranny? Do I, or my wife, tyrannize, when we desire thee in all love to put off thy tempting attire, and veil thy provokers to sin?

Mrs. Lov. Deliver me, good Heaven! or I shall go distracted. [*Walks about.*]

Mrs. Pr. So! now thy pinnars are tost, and thy breasts pulled up!—Verily, they were seen enough before.—Fie upon the filthy taylor who made thy stays.

Mrs. Lov. I wish I were in my grave! Kill me rather than treat me thus.

Ob. Pr. Kill thee! ha, ha! thou thinkest thou art acting some lewd play sure:—kill thee! Art thou prepared for death, Anne Lovely? No, no, thou wouldst rather have a husband, Anne:—thou wantest a gilt coach, with six lazy fellows behind, to flaunt it in the ring of vanity, among the princes and rulers of the

land—who pamper themselves with the fatness thereof; but I will take care that none shall squander away thy father's estate: thou shalt marry none such, Anne.

Mrs. Lov. Wou'd you marry me to one of your own canting sect?

Ob. Pr. Yea, verily, no one else shall ever get my consent, I do assure thee, Anne.

Mrs. Lov. And I do assure thee, Obadiah, that I will as soon turn papist, and die in a convent.

Mrs. Pr. Oh wickedness!

Mrs. Lov. Oh stupidity!

Ob. Pr. Oh blindness of heart!

Mrs. Lov. Thou blinder of the world, don't provoke me,—lest I betray your sanctity, and leave your wife to judge of your purity:—What were the emotions of your spirit—when you squeez'd Mary by the hand last night in the pantry,—when she told you, you buss'd so filthily? Ah! you had no aversion to naked bosoms, when you begged her to shew you a little, little, little bit of her delicious bubby:—don't you remember those words, Mr. Prim?

Mrs. Pr. What does she say, Obadiah?

Ob. Pr. She talketh unintelligibly, Sarah. Which way did she hear this? This should not have reach'd the ears of the wicked ones:—verily, it troubleth me.

[*Aside.*

Enter Servant.

Serv. Philip Modelove, whom they call Sir Phi-

D

lip, is below, and such another with him; shall I send them up?

Ob. Pr. Yea.

[*Exit.*]

Enter Sir PHILIP and Colonel.

Sir Phil. How dost thou do, friend Prim? Odso! my she-friend here too! What, are you documenting Miss Nancy; reading her a lecture upon the pinch'd coif, I warrant ye.

Mrs. Pr. I am sure thou didst never read her any lecture that was good.—My flesh riseth so at these wicked ones, that prudence adviseth me to withdraw from their sight.

[*Exit.*]

Col. Oh! that I could find means to speak with her! How charming she appears! I wish I could get this letter into her hand.

[*Aside.*]

Sir Phil. Well, Miss Cockey, I hope thou hast got the better of them.

Mrs. Lov. The difficulties of my life are not to be surmounted, Sir Philip.—I hate the impertinence of him as much as the stupidity of the other.

[*Aside.*]

Ob. Pr. Verily, Philip, thou wilt spoil this maiden.

Sir Phil. I find we still differ in opinion; but that we may none of us spoil her, pr'ythee, Prim, let us consent to marry her.—I have sent for our brother guardians to meet me here about this very thing—Madam, will you give me leave to recommend a husband to you?—Here's a gentleman, whom, in my mind, you can have no objection to.

[*Presents the Colonel to her, she looks another way.*]

Mrs. Lov. Heaven deliver me from the formal, and the fantastic fool!

Col. A fine woman,——a fine horse, and fine equipage, are the finest things in the universe: and if I am so happy to possess you, madam, I shall become the envy of mankind, as much as you outshine your whole sex.

[*As he takes her hand to kiss it, he endeavours to put a letter into it; she lets it drop——Prim takes it up.*]

Mrs. Lov. I have no ambition to appear conspicuously ridiculous, sir.

[*Turning from him.*]

Col. So fail the hopes of Fainwell.

Mrs. Lov. Ha! Fainwell! 'Tis he! What have I done? Prim has the letter, and it will be discover'd.

[*Aside.*]

Ob. Pr. Friend, I know not thy name, so cannot call thee by it; but thou seest thy letter is unwelcome to the maiden, she will not read it.

Mrs. Lov. Nor shall you; [*Snatches the letter.*] I'll tear it in a thousand pieces, and scatter it, as I will the hopes of all those that any of you shall recommend to me.

[*Tears the letter.*]

Sir Phil. Ha! Right woman, faith!

Col. Excellent woman!

[*Aside.*]

Ob. Pr. Friend, thy garb savoureth too much of the vanity of the age for my approbation; nothing that resembleth Philip Modelove shall I love, mark that;——therefore, friend Philip, bring no more of thy own apes under my roof.

Sir Phil. I am so entirely a stranger to the mon-

sters of thy breed, that I shall bring none of them I am sure.

Col. I am likely to have a pretty task by that time I have gone thro' them all; but she's a city worth taking, and 'egad I'll carry on the siege: if I can but blow up the out-works, I fancy I am pretty secure of the town. [*Aside.*]

Enter Servant.

Serv. Toby Periwinkle and Thomas Tradelove demand to see thee. [*To Sir Philip.*]

Sir Phil. Bid them come up.

Mrs. Lov. Deliver me from such an inundation of noise and nonsense. Oh, Fainwell! whatever thy contrivance be, prosper it Heaven;—but oh! I fear thou never canst redeem me.

Sir Phil. *Sic transit gloria mundi.*

Enter Mr. PERIWINKLE and TRADELOVE.

These are my brother guardians, Mr. Fainwell, pr'ythee observe the creatures. [*Aside to Col.*]

Trade. Well, Sir Philip, I obey your summons.

Per. Pray, what have you to offer for the good of Mrs. Lovely, Sir Philip?

Sir Phil. First, I desire to know what you intend to do with that lady? Must she be sent to the Indies for a venture—or live an old maid, and then be enter'd amongst your curiosities, and shewn for a monster, Mr. Periwinkle?

Col. Humph, curiosities; that must be the virtuoso.

[*Aside.*

Per. Why, what wou'd you do with her?

Sir Phil. I would recommend this gentleman to her for a husband, sir—a person, whom I have pick'd out from the whole race of mankind.

Ob. Pr. I would advise thee to shuffle him again with the rest of mankind, for I like him not.

Col. Pray, sir, without offence to your formality, what may be your objections?

Ob. Pr. Thy person; thy manners; thy dress; thy acquaintance;—thy every thing, friend.

Sir Phil. You are most particularly obliging, friend, ha, ha!

Trade. What business do you follow, pray, sir?

Col. Humph, by that question he must be the broker. [*Aside.*—Business, sir! the business of a gentleman.

Trade. That is as much as to say, you dress fine, feed high, lie with every woman you like, and pay your surgeon's bills better than your taylor's, or your butcher's.

Col. The court is much obliged to you, sir, for your character of a gentleman.

Trade. The court, sir! What would the court do without us citizens?

Sir Phil. Without your wives and daughters, you mean, Mr. Tradelove.

Per. Have you ever travell'd, sir?

Col. That question must not be answered now—
In books I have, sir.

Per. In books! That's fine travelling indeed!—
Sir Philip, when you present a person I like, he shall
have my consent to marry Mrs. Lovely; till then,
your servant. *[Exit.]*

Col. I'll make you like me before I have done with
you, or I am mistaken. *[Aside.]*

Trade. And when you can convince me that a beau
is more useful to my country than a merchant, you
shall have mine; 'till then, you must excuse me.

[Exit.]

Col. So much for trade—I'll fit you too. *[Aside.]*

Sir Phil. In my opinion, this is very inhuman treat-
ment, as to the lady, Mr. Prim.

Ob. Pr. Thy opinion and mine happens to differ as
much as our occupations, friend; business requireth
my presence, and folly thine; and so I must bid thee
farewell. *[Exit.]*

Sir Phil. Here's breeding for you, Mr. Fainwell!
Gad take me,

Half my estate I'd give to see 'em bit.

Col. *I hope to bite you all, if my plot hit.* *[Exeunt.]*

ACT III. SCENE I.

The Tavern. SACKBUT and the Colonel in an Egyptian Dress.

Sackbut.

A LUCKY beginning, colonel,—you have got the old beau's consent.

Col. Ay, he's a reasonable creature; but the other three will require some pains.—Shall I pass upon him, think you? 'Egad, in my mind, I look as antique as if I had been preserved in the Ark.

Sack. Pass upon him! ay, ay, as roundly as white wine dash'd with sack does for mountain and sherry, if you have assurance enough—

Col. I have no apprehension from that quarter; assurance is the cockade of a soldier.

Sack. Ay, but the assurance of a soldier differs much from that of a traveller.—Can you lye with a good grace?

Col. As heartily, when my mistress is the prize, as I would meet the foe when my country call'd, and king commanded; so don't you fear that part; if he don't know me again, I am safe.—I hope he'll come.

Sack. I wish all my debts would come as sure. I told him you had been a great traveller, had many valuable curiosities, and was a person of a most singular taste; he seem'd transported, and begg'd me to keep you till he came.

Col. Ay, ay, he need not fear my running away.—Let's have a bottle of sack, landlord; our ancestors drank sack.

Sack. You shall have it.

Col. And whereabouts is the trap-door you mentioned?

Sack. There's the conveyance, sir. *[Exit.]*

Col. Now, if I should cheat all these roguish guardians, and carry off my mistress in triumph, it would be what the French call a *grand coup d'eclat*—Odso! here comes Periwinkle.—Ah! Deuce take this beard; pray Jupiter it does not give me the slip, and spoil all.

Enter SACKBUT with Wine, and PERIWINKLE following.

Sack. Sir, this gentleman hearing you have been a great traveller, and a person of fine speculation, begs leave to take a glass with you; he is a man of a curious taste himself.

Col. The gentleman has it in his face and garb; sir, you are welcome.

Per. Sir, I honour a traveller, and men of your enquiring disposition; the oddness of your habit pleases me extremely; 'tis very antique, and for that I like it.

Col. 'Tis very antique, sir;—this habit once belonged to the famous Claudius Ptolemeus, who lived in the year one hundred and thirty-five.

Sack. If he keeps up to the sample, he shall lye

with the devil for a bean-stack, and win it every straw.

[*Aside.*

Per. A hundred and thirty-five! why, that's prodigious now!—Well, certainly 'tis the finest thing in the world to be a traveller.

Col. For my part, I value none of the modern fashions a fig-leaf.

Per. No more don't I, sir; I had rather be the jest of a fool, than his favourite.—I am laugh'd at here for my singularity—This coat, you must know, sir, was formerly worn by that ingenious and very learned person, Mr. John Tradescant, of Lambeth.

Col. John Tradescant! Let me embrace you, sir—John Tradescant was my uncle, by my mother's side; and I thank you for the honour you do his memory; he was a very curious man indeed.

Per. Your uncle, sir—Nay, then 'tis no wonder that your taste is so refined; why you have it in your blood.—My humble service to you, sir; to the immortal memory of John Tradescant, your never-to-be-forgotten uncle.

[*Drinks.*

Col. Give me a glass, landlord.

Per. I find you are primitive, even in your wine; Canary was the drink of our wise forefathers; 'tis balsamic, and saves the charge of 'pothecaries cordials—Oh! that I had lived in your uncle's days! or rather, that he were now alive;—Oh! how proud he'd be of such a nephew!

Sack. Oh, pox! that would have spoil'd the jest.

[*Aside.*

Per. A person of your curiosity must have collected many rarities.

Col. I have some, sir, which are not yet come ashore; as an Egyptian idol.

Per. Pray, what may that be?

Col. It is, sir, a kind of an ape, which they formerly worshipp'd in that country; I took it from the breast of a female mummy.

Per. Ha, ha! our women retain part of their idolatry to this day, for many an ape lies on a lady's breast, ha, ha!——

Sack. A smart old thief. *[Aside.]*

Col. Two tusks of an Hippopotamus, two pair of Chinese nut-crackers, and one Egyptian mummy.

Per. Pray, sir, have you never a crocodile?

Col. Humph! the boatswain brought one with a design to shew it, but touching at Rotterdam, and hearing it was no rarity in England, he sold it to a Dutch poet.

Sack. The devil's in that nation, it rivals us in every thing.

Per. I should have been very glad to have seen a living crocodile.

Col. My genius led me to things more worthy of regard——Sir, I have seen the utmost limits of this globular world; I have seen the sun rise and set; know in what degree of heat he is at noon, to the breadth of a hair, and what quantity of combustibles he burns in a day, and how much of it turns to ashes and how much to cinders.

Per. To cinders! You amaze me, sir, I never heard that the sun consum'd any thing.—Descartes tells us——

Col. Descartes, with the rest of his brethren, both ancient and modern, knew nothing of the matter.—I tell you, sir, that nature admits an annual decay, tho' imperceptible to vulgar eyes.—Sometimes his rays destroy below, sometimes above.—You have heard of blazing comets, I suppose?

Per. Yes, yes, I remember to have seen one, and our astrologers tell us of another which will happen very quickly.

Col. Those comets are little islands bordered on the sun, which at certain times are set on fire by that luminous body's moving over them perpendicular, which will one day occasion a general conflagration.

Sack. One need not scruple the colonel's capacity, faith. [*Aside.*]

Per. This is marvellous strange! These cinders are what I never read of in any of our learned dissertations.

Col. I don't know how the devil you should. [*Aside.*]

Sack. He has it at his fingers ends; one would swear he had learn'd to lye at school, he does it so cleverly. [*Aside.*]

Per. Well! you travellers see strange things? Pray, sir, have you any of those cinders?

Col. I have, among my other curiosities.

Per. Oh, what have I lost for want of travelling! Pray, what have you else?

Col. Several things worth your attention.—I have a muff made of the feathers of those geese that sav'd the Roman capitol.

Per. Is't possible?

Sack. Yes, if you are such a gander as to believe him. [*Aside.*]

Col. I have an Indian leaf, which, open, will cover an acre of land, yet folds up in so little a compass, you may put it into your snuff-box.

Sack. Humph! That's a thunderer. [*Aside.*]

Per. Amazing!

Col. Ah! mine is but a little one; I have seen some of them that would cover one of the Caribbee Islands.

Per. Well, if I don't travel before I die, I sha'n't rest in my grave—Pray, what do the Indians with them?

Col. Sir, they use them in their wars for tents, the old women for riding-hoods, the young for fans and umbrellas.

Sack. He has a fruitful invention. [*Aside.*]

Per. I admire our East-India Company imports none of them; they would certainly find their account in them.

Col. Right, if they could find the leaves. [*Aside.*]
—Look ye, sir, do you see this little phial?

Per. Pray you, what is it?

Col. This is call'd Poluflosboio.

Per. Poluflosboio!—It has a rumbling sound.

Col. Right, sir; it proceeds from a rumbling nature.—This water was part of those waves which

bore Cleopatra's vessel when she sail'd to meet Antony.

Per. Well, of all that ever travelled, none had a taste like you.

Col. But here's the wonder of the world.—This, sir, is called Zona, or Moros Musphonon; the virtues of this are inestimable.

Per. Moros Musphonon! What in the name of wisdom can that be?—To me it seems a plain belt.

Col. This girdle has carried me all the world over.

Per. You have carried it, you mean.

Col. I mean as I say, sir.—Whenever I am girded with this, I am invisible; and by turning this little screw, can be in the court of the Great Mogul, the Grand Signior, and King George, in as little time as your cook can poach an egg.

Per. You must pardon me, sir, I can't believe it.

Col. If my landlord pleases, he shall try the experiment immediately.

Sack. I thank you kindly, sir, but I have no inclination to ride post to the devil.

Col. No, no, you sha'n't stir a foot, I'll only make you invisible.

Sack. But if you could not make me visible again.

Per. Come, try it upon me, sir, I am not afraid of the devil, nor all his tricks.—'Sbud, I'll stand 'em all.

Col. There, sir, put it on.—Come, landlord, you and I must face the East. [*They turn about.*] Is it on, sir?

Per. 'Tis on.

[*They turn about again.*

Sack. Heaven protect me! Where is he?

Per. Why here, just where I was.

Sack. Where, where, in the name of virtue? Ah, poor Mr. Periwinkle!—Egad, look to't, you had best, sir; and let him be seen again, or I shall have you burnt for a wizard.

Col. Have patience, good landlord.

Per. But really don't you see me now?

Sack. No more than I see my grandmother, that died forty years ago.

Per. Are you sure you don't lye? Methinks I stand just where I did, and see you as plain as I did before.

Sack. Ah! I wish I could see you once again.

Col. Take off the girdle, sir. [*He takes it off.*

Sack. Ah, sir, I am glad to see you with all my heart. [*Embraces him.*

Per. This is very odd; certainly there must be some trick in't.—Pray, sir, will you do me the favour to put it on yourself.

Col. With all my heart.

Per. But first I'll secure the door.

Col. You know how to turn the screw, Mr. Sack-but?

Sack. Yes, yes.—Come, Mr. Periwinkle, we must turn full East.

[*They turn, the Colonel sinks down the Trap-door.*

Col. 'Tis done, now turn.

[*They turn.*

Per. Ha! Mercy upon me; my flesh creeps upon

my bones.—This must be a conjurer, Mr. Sackbut.

Sack. He is the devil, I think.

Per. Oh, Mr. Sackbut, why do you name the devil, when perhaps he may be at your elbow?

Sack. At my elbow, marry, Heaven forbid.

Col. Are you satisfied? [*From under the Stage.*]

Per. Yes, sir, yes—How hollow his voice sounds!

Sack. Yours seem'd just the same—Faith, I wish this girdle were mine, I'd sell wine no more. Hark ye, Mr. Periwinkle, [*Takes him aside till the Colonel rises again.*] if he would sell this girdle, you might travel with great expedition.

Col. But it is not to be parted with for money.

Per. I am sorry for't, sir, because I think it the greatest curiosity I ever heard of.

Col. By the advice of a learned physiognomist in Grand Cairo, who consulted the lines in my face, I returned to England, where he told me I should find a rarity in the keeping of *four* men, which I was born to possess for the benefit of mankind; and the *first* of the *four* that gave me his consent, I should present him with this girdle—'Till I have found this jewel, I shall not part with the girdle.

Per. What can that rarity be? Didn't he name it to you?

Col. Yes, sir: he called it a chaste, beautiful, unaffected woman.

Per. Pish! Women are no rarities—I never had any great taste that way. I married, indeed, to please

my father, and I got a girl to please my wife ; but she and the child (thank Heaven) died together—— Women are the very gewgaws of the creation ; playthings for boys, who, when they write man, they ought to throw aside.

Sack. A fine lecture to be read to a circle of ladies !

[*Aside.*

Per. What woman is there, drest in all the pride and foppery of the times, can boast of such a fore-top as the cockatoo ?

Col. I must humour him—[*Aside.*]—Such a skin as the lizard ?

Per. Such a shining breast as the humming bird ?

Col. Such a shape as the antelope ?

Per. Or, in all the artful mixture of their various dresses, have they half the beauty of one box of butterflies ?

Col. No, that must be allow'd—For my part, if it were not for the benefit of mankind, I'd have nothing to do with them, for they are as indifferent to me as a sparrow or a flesh-fly.

Per. Pray, sir, what benefit is the world to reap from this lady ?

Col. Why, sir, she is to bear me a son, who shall revive the art of embalming, and the old Roman manner of burying their dead ; and, for the benefit of posterity, he is to discover the longitude, so long sought for in vain.

Per. Od ! these are valuable things, Mr. Sackbut !

Sack. He hits it off admirably, and t' other swal-

lows it like sack and sugar—[*Aside.*]—Certainly this lady must be your ward, Mr. Periwinkle, by her being under the care of four persons.

Per. By the description it should——'Egad, if I could get that girdle, I'd ride with the sun, and make the tour of the world in four and twenty hours.—[*Aside.*] And are you to give that girdle to the first of the four guardians that shall give his consent to marry that lady, say you, sir?

Col. I am so order'd, when I can find him.

Per. I fancy I know the very woman—her name is Anne Lovely?

Col. Excellent!—he said, indeed, that the first letter of her name was L.

Per. Did he really?—Well, that's prodigiously amazing, that a person in Grand Cairo should know any thing of my ward.

Col. Your ward!

Per. To be plain with you, sir, I am one of those four guardians.

Col. Are you indeed, sir? I am transported to find the man who is to possess this Moros Musphonon is a person of so curious a taste—Here is a writing drawn up by that famous Egyptian, which if you will please to sign, you must turn your face full north, and the girdle is yours.

Per. If I live till this boy is born, I'll be embalm'd, and sent to the Royal Society when I die.

Col. That you shall most certainly.

Enter Drawer.

Draw. Here's Mr. Staytape the taylor enquires for you, colonel.

Col. Who do you speak to, you son of a whore ?

Per. Ha! colonel.

[*Aside.*

Col. Confound the blundering dog!

[*Aside.*

Draw. Why, to colonel——

Sack. Get you out, you rascal.

[*Kicks him out, and goes after him.*

Draw. What the devil is the matter ?

Col. This dog has ruin'd all my schemes, I see by Periwinkle's looks.

[*Aside.*

Per. How finely I should have been chous'd—colonel, you'll pardon me that I did not give you your title before—it was pure ignorance, faith it was—Pray—hem, hem! Pray, colonel, what post had this learned Egyptian in your regiment ?

Col. A pox of your sneer. [*Aside.*] I don't understand you, sir.

Per. No, that's strange! I understand you, colonel—An Egyptian of Grand Cairo! ha, ha, ha!—I am sorry such a well-invented tale should do you no more service——We old fellows can see as far into a millstone as them that pick it—I am not to be trick'd out of my trust—mark that.

Col. The devil! I must carry it off, I wish I were fairly out. [*Aside.*] Look ye, sir, you may make what jest you please—but the stars will be obey'd, sir, and, depend upon't, I shall have the lady, and you.

none of the girdle.—Now for Mr. Freeman's part of the plot. [*Aside.*] [*Exit.*]

Per. The stars! ha, ha!—No star has favoured you, it seems——The girdle! ha, ha, ha! none of your legerdemain tricks can pass upon me——Why, what a pack of trumpery has this rogue picked up—His Pagod, Polufloshoio, his Zonas, Moros Musphonons, and the devil knows what——But I'll take care—Ha, gone!—Ay, 'twas time to sneak off.—Soho! the house! [*Enter Sackbut.*] Where is this trickster? Send for a constable, I'll have this rascal before the lord mayor; I'll Grand 'Cairo him, with a pox to him—I believe you had a hand in putting this imposture upon me, Sackbut.

Sack. Who I, Mr. Periwinkle? I scorn it; I perceiv'd he was a cheat, and left the room on purpose to send for a constable to apprehend him, and endeavour'd to stop him when he went out—But the rogue made but one step from the stairs to the door, call'd a coach, leap'd into it, and drove away like the devil, as Mr. Freeman can witness, who is at the bar, and desires to speak with you; he is this minute come to town.

Per. Send him in. [*Exit Sackbut.*] What a scheme this rogue has laid! How I should have been laugh'd at, had it succeeded!

Enter FREEMAN, booted and spurr'd.

Mr. Freeman, your dress commands your welcome to

town; what will you drink? I had like to have been impos'd upon here by the veriest rascal——

Free. I am sorry to hear it—The dog flew for't; he had not 'scaped me, if I had been aware of him; Sackbut struck at him but miss'd his blow, or he had done his business for him.

Per. I believe you never heard of such a contrivance, Mr. Freeman, as this fellow had found out.

Free. Mr. Sackbut has told me the whole story, Mr. Periwinkle; but now I have something to tell you of much more importance to yourself.—I happen'd to lie one night at Coventry, and knowing your uncle Sir Toby Periwinkle, I paid him a visit, and, to my great surprise, found him dying.

Per. Dying! *

Free. Dying, in all appearance; the servants weeping, the room in darkness: the 'pothecary, shaking his head, told me the doctors had given him over; and then there are small hopes, you know.

Per. I hope he made his will—he always told me he would make me his heir.

Free. I have heard you say as much, and therefore resolved to give you notice. I should think it would not be amiss if you went down to-morrow morning.

Per. It is a long journey, and the roads very bad.

Free. But he has a great estate, and the land very good—Think upon that.

Per. Why, that's true, as you say; I'll think upon it: in the mean time, I give you many thanks for

your civility, Mr. Freeman, and should be glad of your company to dine with me.

Free. I am oblig'd to be at Jonathan's coffee-house at two, and now it is half an hour after one; if I dispatch my business, I'll wait on you; I know your hour.

Per. You shall be very welcome, Mr. Freeman, and so your humble servant. [Exit.

Re-enter Colonel and SACKBUT.

Free. Ha, ha, ha! I have done your business, colonel; he has swallow'd the bait.

Col. I overheard all, though I am a little in the dark; I am to personate a highwayman, I suppose—that's a project I am not fond of; for though I may fright him out of his consent, he may fright me out of my life, when he discovers me, as he certainly must in the end.

Free. No, no, I have a plot for you without danger, but first we must manage Tradelove—Has the taylor brought your clothes?

Sack. Yes, pox take the thief.

Free. Well, well, no matter, I warrant we have him yet—But now you must put on the Dutch merchant.

Col. The deuce of this trading plot—I wish he had been an old soldier, that I might have attack'd him in my own way, heard him fight o'er all the battles of the late war—But for trade, by Jupiter, I shall never do it.

Sack. Never fear, colonel, Mr. Freeman will instruct you.

Free. You'll see what others do, the coffee-house will instruct you.

Col. I must venture, however—But I have a farther plot in my head upon Tradelove; which you must assist me in, Freeman; you are in credit with him, I heard you say.

Free. I am, and will scruple nothing to serve you, colonel.

Col. Come along then—Now for the Dutchman—Honest Ptolomy. By your leave.

Now must bag-wig and business come in play;

A thirty thousand pound girl leads the way.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Jonathan's Coffee-house, in 'Change-alley. A crowd of People with Rolls of Paper and Parchment in their Hands; a Bar, and Coffee Boys waiting. Enter TRADELOVE and Stock-Jobbers, with Rolls of Paper and Parchment.

1st Stock-Jobber.

SOUTH-Sea at seven-eighths; who buys?

2d Stock. South-Sea bonds due at Michaelmas,

1718. Class lottery-tickets?

3d Stock. East India bonds?

4th Stock. What, all sellers and no buyers? *Gen-*

tllemen, I'll buy a thousand pound for Tuesday next, at three-fourths.

Coff. Boy. Fresh coffee, gentlemen, fresh coffee?

Trade. Hark ye, Gabriel, you'll pay the difference of that stock we transacted for t'other day?

Gab. Ay, Mr. Tradelove, here's a note for the money upon the Sword Blade Company.

[Gives him a Note.]

Coff. Boy. Bohea-tea, gentlemen?

Enter a Man.

Man. Is Mr. Smuggle here?

1st Coff. Boy. Mr. Smuggle's not here, sir, you'll find him at the books.

2d Stock. Ho! here comes two sparks from t'other end of the town; what news bring they?

Enter two Gentlemen.

Trade. I would fain bite the spark in the brown coat; he comes very often into the Alley, but never employs a broker.

Enter Colonel and FREEMAN.

2d Stock. Who does any thing in the Civil List lottery? or Caco? Zounds, where are all the Jews this afternoon? Are you a bull or a bear to-day, Abraham?

3d Stock. A bull, faith—but I have a good put for next week.

Trade. Mr. Freeman, your servant! Who is that gentleman?

Free. A Dutch merchant just come to England; but hark ye, Mr. Tradelove—I have a piece of news will get you as much as the French king's death did if you are expeditious.

Free. [*Shewing him a Letter.*] Read there, I received it just now from one that belongs to the Emperor's minister.

Trade. [*Reads.*] Sir, as I have many obligations to you, I cannot miss any opportunity to shew my gratitude; this moment my lord has receiv'd a private express, that the Spaniards have rais'd their siege from before Cagliari; if this proves any advantage to you, it will answer both the ends and wishes of, sir, your most obliged humble servant,
Henricus Dusseldorp.

Postscript.

In two or three hours the news will be public.

May one depend upon this, Mr. Freeman?

[*Aside to Freeman.*

Free. You may.—I never knew this person send me a false piece of news in my life.

Trade. Sir, I am much obliged to you—'Egad, 'tis rare news.—Who sells South Sea for next week?

Stock-Job. [*All together.*] I sell; I, I, I, I, I sell.

1st Stock. I'll sell 5000l. for next week, at five-eighths.

2d Stock.—I'll sell ten thousand, at five-eighths, for the same time.

Trade. Nay, nay, hold, hold, not all together, gen-

lemen, I'll be no bull, I'll buy no more than I can take: will you sell ten thousand pounds at a half, for any day next week, except Saturday?

1st Stock. I'll sell it you, Mr. Tradelove.

Free. [*Whispers to one of the Gentlemen.*]

Gent. [*Aside.*] The Spaniards rais'd the siege of Cagliari; I don't believe one word of it.

2d Gent. Rais'd the siege; as much as you have rais'd the monument.

Free. 'Tis rais'd, I assure you, sir.

2d Gent. What will you lay on't?

Free. What you please.

1st Gent. Why, I have a brother upon the spot, in the Emperor's service; I am certain if there were any such thing, I should have had a letter.

2d Stock. How's this? the siege of Cagliari rais'd? —I wish it may be true, 'twill make business stir, and stocks rise.

1st Stock. Tradelove's a cunning fat bear; if this news proves true, I shall repent I sold him the five thousand pounds.—Pray, sir, what assurance have you that the siege is rais'd?

Free. There is come an express to the Emperor's minister.

2d Stock. I'll know that presently.

1st Gent. Let it come where it will, I'll hold you fifty pounds 'tis false.

Free. 'Tis done.

2d Gent. I'll lay you a brace of hundreds upon the same.

Free. I'll take you.

4th Stock. 'Egad, I'll hold twenty pieces 'tis not rais'd, sir.

Free. Done with you too.

Trade. I'll lay any man a brace of thousands the siege is rais'd.

Free. The Dutch merchant is your man to take in.

[*Aside to Tradelove.*]

Trade. Does not he know the news?

Free. Not a syllable; if he did, he would bet a hundred thousand pounds as soon as one penny;—he's plaguy rich, and a mighty man at wagers.

[*To Tradelove.*]

Trade. Say you so—'Egad, I'll bite him, if possible.—Are you from Holland, sir?

Col. Ya, mynheer.

Trade. Had you the news before you came away?

Col. What believe you, mynheer?

Trade. What do I believe? Why, I believe that the Spaniards have actually rais'd the siege of Cagliari.

Col. Wat duyvel's news is dat? 'Tis niet waer, mynheer—'tis no true, sir.

Trade. 'Tis so true, mynheer, that I'll lay you two thousand pounds upon it.—You are sure the letter may be depended upon, Mr. Freeman?

Free. Do you think I would venture my money, if I were not sure of the truth of it? [*Aside to Trade.*]

Col. Two duysend pound, mynheer, 'tis gadaen—dis gentleman sal hold de gelt. [*Gives Free. money.*]

Trade. With all my heart—this binds the wager.

Free. You have certainly lost, mynheer, the siege is rais'd indeed.

Col. Ik gelov't niet, Mynheer Freeman, ik sal ye dubbled honden, if you please.

Free. I am let into the secret, therefore won't win your money.

Trade. Ha, ha, ha! I have snapt the Dutchman, faith, ha, ha! this is no ill day's work.—Pray, may I crave your name, mynheer?

Col. Myn naem, mynheer! myn naem is Jan van Timtamtirelereletta Heer Fainwell.

Trade. Zounds, 'tis a damn'd long name, I shall never remember it—Myn Heer van, Tim, Tim, Tim, —What the devil is it?

Free. Oh! never heed, I know the gentleman, and will pass my word for twice the sum.

Trade. That's enough.

Col. You'll hear of me sooner than you'll wish, old gentleman, I fancy. [*Aside.*] You'll come to Sackbut's, Freeman. [*Exit.*]

Free. Immediately. [*Aside to the Colonel.*]

1st Man. Humphry Hump here?

2d Boy. Mr. Humphry Hump is not here; you'll find him upon the Dutch walk.

Trade. Mr. Freeman, I give you many thanks for your kindness——

Free. I fear you'll repent when you know all.

[*Aside.*]

Trade. Will you dine with me?

Free. I'm engag'd at Sackbut's; adieu. [*Exit.*]

Trade. Sir, your humble servant. Now I'll see what I can do upon 'Change with my news. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.

The Tavern. Enter FREEMAN and Colonel.

Free. Ha, ha, ha! The old fellow swallowed the bait as greedily as a gudgeon.

Col. I have him, faith, ha, ha, ha!—His two thousand pounds secure—If he would keep his money, he must part with the lady, ha, ha!—What came of your two friends? they perform'd their part very well; you should have brought 'em to take a glass with us.

Free. No matter, we'll drink a bottle together another time.—I did not care to bring them hither; there's no necessity to trust them with the main secret, you know, colonel.

Col. Nay, that's right, Freeman.

Enter SACKBUT.

Sack. Joy, joy, colonel! the luckiest accident in the world.

Col. What say'st thou?

Sack. This letter does your business.

Col. [*Reads.*] To Obadiah Prim, Hosier, near the building call'd the Monument, in London.

Free. A letter to Prim! How came you by it?

Sack. Looking over the letters our post-woman

brought, as I always do, to see what letters are directed to my house (for she can't read, you must know), I 'spy'd this directed to Prim, so paid for it among the rest; I have given the old jade a pint of wine on purpose to delay time, till you see if the letter be of any service; then I'll seal it up again, and tell her I took it by mistake;—I have read it, and fancy you'll like the project.—Read, read, colonel.

Col. [Reads.] *Friend Prim, there is arrived from Pennsylvania one Simon Pure, a leader of the faithful, who hath sojourned with us eleven days, and hath been of great comfort to the brethren.—He intendeth for the quarterly meeting in London; I have recommended him to thy house. I pray thee treat him kindly, and let thy wife cherish him, for he's of weakly constitution—he will depart from us the third day; which is all from thy friend in the faith,*

Aminadab Holdfast.

Ha, ha, excellent! I understand you, landlord, I am to personate this Simon Pure, am I not?

Sack. Don't you like the hint?

Col. Admirably well!

Free. 'Tis the best contrivance in the world, if the right Simon gets not there before you——

Col. No, no, the Quakers never ride post; he can't be here before to-morrow at soonest: do you send and buy me a Quaker's dress, Mr. Sackbut; and suppose, Freeman, you should wait at the Bristol coach, that if you see any such person, you might contrive to give me notice.——

Free. I will—the country dress and boots, are they ready?

Sack. Yes, yes, every thing, sir.

Free. Bring 'em in then.—[*Exit Sack.*] Thou must dispatch Periwinkle first—remember his uncle, Sir Toby Periwinkle, is an old batchelor of seventy-five—that he has seven hundred a year, most in abbey land—that he was once in love with your mother, shrewdly suspected by some to be your father—that you have been thirty years his steward—and ten years his gentleman—remember to improve these hints.

Col. Never fear, let me alone for that—but what's the steward's name?

Free. His name is Pillage.

Col. Enough—[*Enter Sackbut with Clothes.*]—
Now for the country put— [Dresses.]

Free. 'Egad, landlord, thou deservest to have the first night's lodging with the lady for thy fidelity;—what say you, colonel, shall we settle a club here? you'll make one?

Col. Make one! I'll bring a set of honest officers, that will spend their money as freely to the king's health, as they would their blood in his service.

Sack. I thank you, colonel; here, here. [*Bell rings.*]
[*Exit Sackbut.*]

Col. So, now for my boots. [*Puts on boots.*] Shall I find you here, Freeman, when I come back?

Free. Yes,—or I'll leave word with Sackbut where he may send for me—Have you the writings, the will—and every thing?

Col. All, all!——

Enter SACKBUT.

Sack. Zounds! Mr. Freeman! yonder is Trade-
love in the damned'st passion in the world—He swears
you are in the house—he says you told him you were
to dine here.

Free. I did so, ha, ha, ha! he has found himself
bit already.——

Col. The devil! he must not see me in this dress.

Sack. I told him I expected you here, but you were
not come yet——

Free. Very well—make you haste out, colonel, and
let me alone to deal with him: where is he?

Sack. In the King's Head.

Col. You remember what I told you?

Free. Ay, ay, very well. Landlord, let him know
I am come in—and now, Mr. Pillage, success at-
tend you. [Exit Sack.

Col. Mr. Proteus rather——

From changing shape, and imitating Jove,

I draw the happy omens of my love.

I'm not the first young brother of the blade,

Who made his fortune in a masquerade.

[Exit Colonel]

Enter TRADELOVE.

Free. Zounds! Mr. Tradelove, we're bit, it seems.

Trade. Bit, do you call it, Mr. Freeman! I am
ruin'd.—Pox on your news.

Free. Pox on the rascal that sent it me.——

Trade. Sent it you! Why Gabriel Skinflint has been at the minister's, and spoke with him, and he has assur'd him 'tis every syllable false; he received no such express.

Free. I know it: I this minute parted with my friend, who protested he never sent me any such letter——Some roguish stock-jobber has done it on purpose to make me lose my money, that's certain: I wish I knew who he was, I'd make him repent it—I have lost gool. by it.

Trade. What signifies your three hundred pounds to what I have lost? There's two thousand pounds to that Dutchman with a cursed long name, besides the stock I bought: the devil! I could tear my flesh—I must never shew my face upon 'Change more;—for, by my soul, I can't pay it.

Free. I am heartily sorry for it! What can I serve you in? Shall I speak to the Dutch merchant, and try to get you time for the payment.

Trade. Time! Ads'heart, I shall never be able to look up again.

Free. I am very much concern'd that I was the occasion, and wish I could be an instrument of retrieving your misfortune; for my own, I value it not. Adso, a thought comes into my head, that, well improv'd, may be of service.

Trade. Ah! there's no thought can be of any service to me, without paying the money, or running away.

Free. How do we know? What do you think of my proposing Mrs. Lovely to him? He is a single man—and I heard him say he had a mind to marry an English woman—nay, more than that, he said somebody told him you had a pretty ward—he wish'd you had betted her instead of your money.

Trade. Ay, but he'd be hang'd before he'd take her instead of the money; the Dutch are too covetous for that; besides, he did not know that there were three more of us, I suppose.

Free. So much the better; you may venture to give him your consent, if he'll forgive you the wager: it is not your business to tell him that your consent will signify nothing.

Trade. That's right, as you say; but will he do it, think you?

Free. I can't tell that; but I'll try what I can do with him—He has promis'd to meet me here an hour hence; I'll feel his pulse, and let you know: if I find it feasible, I'll send for you; if not, you are at liberty to take what measures you please.

Trade. You must extol her beauty, double her portion, and tell him I have the entire disposal of her, and that she can't marry without my consent;—and that I am a covetous rogue, and will never part with her without a valuable consideration.

Free. Ay, ay, let me alone for a lye at a pinch.

Trade. 'Egad, if you can bring this to bear, Mr. Freeman, I'll make you whole again; I'll pay the three hundred pounds you lost with all my soul.

Free. Well, I'll use my best endeavours—Where will you be?

Trade. At home; pray Heaven you prosper.—If I were but the sole trustee now, I should not fear it. Who the devil would be a guardian?

If, when cash runs low, our coffers t' enlarge,

We can't, like other stocks, transfer our charge? [*Exit.*

Free. Ha, ha, ha!—he has it. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

Changes to PERIWINKLE'S House. Enter PERIWINKLE on one Side, and Footmen on t'other.

Foot. A gentleman from Coventry enquires for you, sir.

Per. From my uncle, I warrant you; bring him up—This will save me the trouble, as well as the expence of a journey.

Enter Colonel.

Col. Is your name Periwinkle, sir?

Per. It is, sir.

Col. I am sorry for the message I bring—My old master, whom I served theſe forty years, claims the sorrow due from a faithful servant to an indulgent master. [*Weeps.*

Per. By this I understand, sir, my uncle, Sir Toby Periwinkle, is dead.

Col. He is, sir, and he has left you heir to seven

hundred a year, in as good abbey-land as ever paid Peter-pence to Rome.—I wish you long to enjoy it, but my tears will flow when I think of my benefactor.—[Weeps.] Ah! he was a good man—he has not left many of his fellows—the poor lament him sorely.

Per. I pray, sir, what office bore you?

Col. I was his steward, sir.

Per. I have heard him mention you with much respect; your name is——

Col. Pillage, sir.

Per. Ay, Pillage, I do remember he called you Pillage.—Pray, Mr. Pillage, when did my uncle die?

Col. Monday last, at four in the morning. About two he sign'd his will, and gave it into my hands, and strictly charg'd me to leave Coventry the moment he expir'd; and deliver it to you with what speed I could: I have obey'd him, sir, and there is the will.

[Gives it to *Per.*]

Per. 'Tis very well, I'll lodge it in the Commons.

Col. There are two things which he forgot to insert, but charg'd me to tell you, that he desir'd you'd perform them as readily as if you had found them written in the will, which is to remove his corpse, and bury him by his father at St. Paul's, Covent-Garden, and to give all his servants mourning.

Per. That will be a considerable charge; a pox of all modern fashions. [*Aside.*] Well! it shall be done. Mr. Pillage, I will agree with one of death's fashion-

mongers, call'd an undertaker, to go down, and bring up the body.

Col. I hope, sir, I shall have the honour to serve you in the same station I did your worthy uncle ; I have not many years to stay behind him, and would gladly spend them in the family, where I was brought up—[*Weeps.*]—He was a kind and tender master to me.

Per. Pray don't grieve, Mr. Pillage, you shall hold your place, and every thing else which you held under my uncle.—You make me weep to see you so concern'd. [*Weeps.*] He liv'd to a good old age, and we are all mortal.

Col. We are so, sir, and therefore I must beg you to sign this lease : you'll find Sir Toby has taken particular notice of it in his will——I could not get it time enough from the lawyer, or he had sign'd it before he died. [*Gives him a paper.*]

Per. A lease! for what?

Col. I rented a hundred a year of Sir Toby upon lease, which lease expires at Lady-day next. I desire to renew it for twenty years——that's all, sir.

Per. Let me see. [*Looks over the lease.*]

Col. Matters go swimmingly, if nothing intervene.

[*Aside.*]

Per. Very well—Let's see what he says in his will about it.

[*Lays the lease upon the table, and looks on the will.*]

Col. He's very wary, yet I fancy I shall be too cunning for him. [*Aside.*]

Per. Ho, here it is—*The farm lying—now in possession of Samuel Pillage—suffer him to renew his lease—at the same rent—*Very well, Mr. Pillage, I see my uncle does mention it, and I'll perform his will. Give me the lease—[*Col. gives it him, he looks upon it, and lays it upon the table.*] Pray you step to the door, and call for a pen and ink, Mr. Pillage.

Col. I have a pen and ink in my pocket, sir, [*Pulls out an ink-horn.*] I never go without that.

Per. I think it belongs to your profession—[*He looks upon the pen, while the colonel changes the lease, and lays down the contract.*] I doubt this is but a sorry pen, though it may serve to write my name. [*Writes.*

Col. Little does he think what he signs. [*Aside.*

Per. There is your lease, Mr. Pillage. [*Gives him the paper.*] Now I must desire you to make what haste you can down to Coventry, and take care of every thing, and I'll send down the undertaker for the body; do you attend it up, and whatever charge you are at, I'll repay you.

Col. You have paid me already, I thank you, sir.

[*Aside.*

Per. Will you dine with me?

Col. I would rather not; there are some of my neighbours which I met as I came along, who leave the town this afternoon, they told me, and I should be glad of their company down.

Per. Well, well, I won't detain you.

Col. I don't care how soon I am out.

[*Aside.*

Per. I will give orders about mourning.

Col. You will have cause to mourn, when you know your estate imaginary only. [*Aside.*

*You'll find your hopes and cares alike are vain,
In spite of all the caution you have ta'en,*

Fortune rewards the faithful lover's pain. [*Exit.*

Per. Seven hundred a year! I wish he had died seventeen years ago:—What a valuable collection of rarities might I have had by this time!—I might have travell'd over all the known parts of the globe, and made my own closet rival the Vatican at Rome.—Odso, I have a good mind to begin my travels now; —let me see—I am but sixty! My father, grandfather, and great grandfather, reach'd ninety odd;—I have almost forty years good:—Let me consider! what will seven hundred a year amount to in —ay! in thirty years, I'll say but thirty—thirty times seven, is seven times thirty—that is—just twenty-one thousand pounds,—'tis a great deal of money.—I may very well reserve sixteen hundred of it for a collection of such rarities as will make my name famous to posterity;—I would not die like other mortals, forgotten in a year or two, as my uncle will be—No,

*With nature's curious works I'll raise my fame,
That men, till Doom's-day, may repeat my name.* [*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

Changes to a Tavern. FREEMAN and TRADELOVE over a Bottle.

Trade. Come, Mr. Freeman, here's Mynheer Jan Van Tim, Tam, Tam;—I shall never think of that Dutchman's name——

Free. Mynheer Jan Van Timtamtirelireletta Heer Van Fainwell.

Trade. Ay, Heer Van Fainwell, I never heard such a confounded name in my life—here's his health, I say.

Free. With all my heart.

Trade. Faith I never expected to have found so generous a thing in a Dutchman.

Free. Oh, he has nothing of the Hollander in his temper——except an antipathy to monarchy.—As soon as I told him your circumstances, he reply'd, he would not be the ruin of any man for the world—and immediately made this proposal himself—Let him take what time he will for the payment, said he; or, if he'll give me his ward, I'll forgive him the debt.

Trade. Well, Mr. Freeman, I can but thank you.—'Egad you have made a man of me again! and if ever I lay a wager more, may I rot in a gaol.

Free. I assure you, Mr. Tradelove, I was very much concern'd, because I was the occasion——tho' very innocently, I protest.

Trade. I dare swear you was, Mr. Freeman.

Enter a Fiddler.

Fid. Please to have a lesson of music, or a song, gentlemen?

Free. Song; ay, with all our hearts; have you a very merry one?

Fid. Yes, sir, my wife and I can give you a merry dialogue. *[Here is the song.]*

Trade. 'Tis very pretty faith.

Free. There's something for you to drink, friend, go, lose no time.

Fid. I thank you, sir. *[Exit.]*

Enter Drawer and Colonel, dressed for the Dutch Merchant.

Col. Ha, Mynheer Tradelove, Ik ben sorry voor your troubles—maer Ik sal you easie maken, Ik will de gelt nie hebben——

Trade. I shall for ever acknowledge the obligation, sir.

Free. But you understand upon what condition, Mr. Tradelove; Mrs. Lovely.

Col. Ya, de Frow sal al te regt setten, Mynheer.

Trade. With all my heart, Mynheer; you shall have my consent to marry her freely——

Free. Well, then, as I am a party concern'd between you, Mynheer Jan Van Timamtirelireletta Heer Van Fainwell shall give you a discharge of your wager under his own hand,——and you shall give him your consent to marry Mrs. Lovely under yours,

—that is the way to avoid all manner of disputes hereafter.

Col. Ya, weeragtig.

Trade. Ay, ay, so it is, Mr. Freeman, I'll give it under mine this minute. [Sits down to write.]

Col. And so Ik sal. [Does the same.]

Free. So ho, the house. [Enter Drawer.] Bid your master come up—I'll see there be witnesses enough to the bargain. [Aside.]

Enter SACKBUT.

Sack. Do you call, gentlemen?

Free. Ay, Mr. Sackbut, we shall want your hand here—

Trade. There, Mynheer, there's my consent, as amply as you can desire; but you must insert your own name, for I know not how to spell it; I have left a blank for it. [Gives the Colonel a paper.]

Col. Ya Ik sal dat well doen—

Free. Now, Mr. Sackbut, you and I will witness it. [They write.]

Col. Daer, Mynheer Tradelove, is your discharge. [Gives him a paper.]

Trade. Be pleas'd to witness this receipt too, gentlemen. [Freeman and Sackbut put their hands.]

Free. Ay, ay, that we will.

Col. Well, Mynheer, ye most meer doen, ye most myn voorsprach to de frow syn.

Free. He means you must recommend him to the lady.—

Trade. That I will, and to the rest of my brother guardians.

Col. Wat, voor, de duyvel, heb you meer guardians?

Trade. Only three, Mynheer.

Col. What donder heb ye myn betrocken Mynheer?
—Had Ik dat gewoeten, Ik soude eaven met you geweest syn.

Sack. But Mr. Tradelove is the principal, and he can do a great deal with the rest, sir.

Free. And he shall use his interest, I promise you, mynheer.

Trade. I will say all that ever I can think on to recommend you, mynheer; and if you please, I'll introduce you to the lady.

Col. Well, dat is waer—Maer ye must first sprek-
en of myn to de frow, and to oudere gentlemen.

Free. Ay, that's the best way,—and then I and the Heer Van Fainwell will meet you there.

Trade. I will go this moment, upon honour—
Your most obedient humble servant.—My speak-
ing will do you little good, mynheer, ha ha! we have
bit you, faith, ha, ha!

Well—my debt's discharged, and for the man,

He has my consent—to get her, if he can. [Exit.

Col. Ha, ha, ha! this was a masterpiece of con-
trivance, Freeman.

Free. He hugs himself with his supposed good for-
tune, and little thinks the luck's on our side!—but
come, pursue the fickle goddess while she's in the
mood—Now for the Quaker.

Col. That's the hardest task.

Of all the counterfeits perform'd by man,

A soldier makes the simplest puritan. [Exeunt.

ACT V. SCENE I.

PRIM's House. Enter Mrs. PRIM and Mrs. LOVELY,
in Quakers' dresses, meeting.

Mrs. Prim.

So, now I like thee, Anne; art thou not better without thy monstrous hoop-coat and patches?—If Heaven should make thee so many black spots upon thy face, wou'd it not fright thee, Anne?

Mrs. Lov. If it shou'd turn your inside outward, and shew all the spots of your hypocrisy, t'would fright me worse!

Mrs. Pr. My hypocrisy! I scorn thy words, Anne, I lay no baits.

Mrs. Lov. If you did, you'd catch no fish.

Mrs. Pr. Well, well, make thy jests—but I'd have thee to know, Anne, that I cou'd have catch'd as many fish (as thou call'st them) in my time, as ever thou did'st with all thy fool-traps about thee—If admirers be thy aim, thou wilt have more of them in this dress than the other—The men, take my word for't, are more desirous to see what we are most careful to conceal.

Mrs. Lov. Is that the reason of your formality, Mrs. Prim? Truth will out: I ever thought, indeed, there was more design than goodness in the pinch'd cap.

Mrs. Pr. Go, thou art corrupted with reading lewd plays, and filthy romances——good for nothing but to lead youth into the high-road of fornication.——Ah! I wish thou art not already too familiar with the wicked ones.

Mrs. Lov. Too familiar with the wicked ones? Pray no more of those freedoms, madam——I am familiar with none so wicked as yourself:——How dare you thus talk to me! you, you, you, unworthy woman you.
[*Bursts into tears.*]

Enter TRADELOVE.

Trade. What, in tears, Nancy? What have you done to her, Mrs. Prim, to make her weep?

Mrs. Lov. Done to me! I admire I keep my senses among you;—but I will rid myself of your tyranny, if there be either law or justice to be had;——I'll force you to give me up my liberty.

Mrs. Pr. Thou hast more need to weep for thy sins, Anne——Yea, for thy manifold sins.

Mrs. Lov. Don't think that I'll be still the fool which you have made me.——No, I'll wear what I please——go when and where I please——and keep what company I think fit, and not what you shall direct——I will.

Trade. For my part, I do think all this very reasonable, Mrs. Lovely—'tis fit you should have your liberty, and for that very purpose I am come.

Enter Mr. PERIWINKLE and OBADIAH PRIM, with a letter in his hand.

Per. I have bought some black stockings of your husband, Mrs. Prim, but he tells me the glover's trade belongs to you; therefore I pray you look me out five or six dozen of mourning gloves, such as are given at funerals, and send them to my house.

Ob. Pr. My friend Periwinkle has got a good wind-fall to-day—seven hundred a year.

Mrs. Pr. I wish thee joy of it, neighbour.

Trade. What, is Sir Toby dead then?

Per. He is! You'll take care, Mrs. Prim.

Mrs. Pr. Yea, I will, neighbour.

Ob. Pr. This letter recommendeth a speaker; 'tis from Aminadab Holdfast of Bristol; peradventure he will be here this night; therefore, Sarah, do thou take care for his reception—— [*Gives her the letter.*

Mrs. Pr. I will obey thee. [*Exit.*

Ob. Pr. What art thou in the dumps for, Anne?

Trade. We must marry her, Mr. Prim.

Ob. Pr. Why truly, if we could find a husband worth having, I should be as glad to see her married as thou wouldst, neighbour.

Per. Well said, there are but few worth having.

Trade. I can recommend you a man, now, that I think you can none of you have an objection to

Enter Sir PHILIP MODELOVE.

Per. You recommend! Nay, whenever she marries, I'll recommend the husband——

Sir Phil. What must it be, a whale or a rhinoceros, Mr. Periwinkle? ha, ha, ha! Mr. Tradelove, I have a bill upon you, [*Gives him a paper*] and have been seeking for you all over the town.

Trade. I'll accept it, Sir Philip, and pay it when due.——

Per. He shall be none of the fops at your end of the town, with full perukes and empty skulls—nor yet any of your trading gentry, who puzzle the heralds to find arms for their coaches.—No, he shall be a man famous for travels, solidity, and curiosity; ——one who has searched into the profundity of nature! When Heaven shall direct such a one, he shall have my consent, because it may turn to the benefit of mankind.

Mrs. Lov. The benefit of mankind! What, would you anatomize me?

Sir Phil. Ay, ay, madam, he would dissect you.

Trade. Or, pore over you through a microscope, to see how your blood circulates from the crown of your head to the sole of your foot—ha, ha! but I have a husband for you, a man that knows how to improve your fortune; one that trades to the four corners of the globe.

Mrs. Lov. And would send me for a venture perhaps.

Trade. One that will dress you in all the pride of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America—a Dutch merchant, my girl.

Sir Phil. A Dutchman! ha, ha; there's a husband for a fine lady.—Ya frow, will you meet myn slapen—ha, ha! he'll learn you to talk the language of the hogs, madam, ha, ha!

Trade. He'll learn you that one merchant is of more service to a nation than fifty coxcombs.—The Dutch know the trading interest to be of more benefit to the state, than the landed.

Sir Phil. But what is either interest to a lady?

Trade. 'Tis the merchant makes the belle—How would the ladies sparkle in the box without the merchant? The Indian diamond! The French brocade! The Italian fan! The Flanders lace! The fine Dutch holland! How would they vent their scandal over their tea-tables? And where would your beaux have Champagne to toast their mistresses, were it not for the merchant?

Ob. Pr. Verily, neighbour Tradlove, thou dost waste thy breath about nothing—All that thou hast said tendeth only to debauch youth, and fill their heads with the pride and luxury of this world—The merchant is a very great friend to satan, and sendeth as many to his dominions as the pope.

Per. Right, I say knowledge makes the man.

Ob. Pr. Yea, but not thy kind of knowledge—it is the knowledge of truth.—Search thou for the light within, and not for baubles, friend.

Mrs. Lov. Ah, study your country's good, Mr. Periwinkle, and not her insects.—Rid you of your home-bred monsters, before you fetch any from abroad—I dare swear you have maggots enough in your own brain to stock all the virtuosos in Europe with butterflies.

Sir Phil. By my soul, Miss Nancy's a wit.

Ob. Pr. That is more than she can say by thee, friend—Look ye, it is in vain to talk, when I meet a man worthy of her, she shall have my leave to marry him.

Mrs. Lov. Provided he be of the faithful——Was there ever such a swarm of caterpillars to blast the hopes of a woman! [*Aside.*] Know this, that you contend in vain: I'll have no husband of your choosing, nor shall you lord it over me long——I'll try the power of an English senate——Orphans have been redress'd, and wills set aside——And none did ever deserve their pity more—Oh, Fainwell! where are thy promises to free me from these vermin? Alas! the task was more difficult than he imagin'd!

A harder task than what the poets tell

Of yore, the fair Andromeda beset;

She but one monster fear'd, I've four to fear,

And see no Perseus, no deliverer near.

[*Exit.*]

Enter Servant, and whispers to PRIM.

Serv. One Simon Pure enquireth for thee.

Per. The woman is mad.

[*Exit.*]

Sir Phil. So you are all in my opinion.

[*Exit.*]

Ob. Pr. Friend Tradelove, business requireth my presence.

Trade. Oh, I shan't trouble you—pox take him for an unmannerly dog—However, I have kept my word with my Dutchman, and will introduce him too for all you. [Exit.]

Enter Colonel in a Quaker's habit.

Ob. Pr. Friend Pure, thou art welcome ; how is it with friend Holdfast, and all friends in Bristol ? Timothy Littleworth, John Slenderbrain, and Christopher Keepfaith ?

Col. A goodly company ! [Aside.] They are all in health, I thank thee for them.

Ob. Pr. Friend Holdfast writes me word, that thou camest lately from Pennsylvania, how do all friends there ?

Col. What the devil shall I say ? I know just as much of Pennsylvania as I do of Bristol. [Aside.]

Ob. Pr. Do they thrive ?

Col. Yea, friend, the blessing of their good works fall upon them.

Enter Mrs. PRIM and Mrs. LOVELY.

Ob. Pr. Sarah, know our friend Pure.

Mrs. Pr. Thou art welcome. [He salutes her.]

Col. Here comes the sum of all my wishes—How charming she appears even in that disguise ! [Aside.]

Ob. Pr. Why dost thou consider the maiden so attentively, friend ?

Col. I will tell thee: about four days ago I saw a vision—This very maiden, but in vain attire, standing on a precipice; and heard a voice, which called me by my name—and bid me put forth my hand and save her from the pit—I did so, and methought the damsel grew unto my side.

Mrs. Pr. What can that portend?

Ob. Pr. The damsel's conversion—I am persuaded.

Mrs. Lov. That's false, I'm sure—— [*Aside.*

Ob. Pr. Wilt thou use the means, friend Pure?

Col. Means! What means? Is she not thy daughter, already one of the faithful?

Mrs. Pr. No, alas! she's one of the ungodly.

Ob. Pr. Pray thee, mind what this good man will say unto thee; he will teach thee the way that thou shouldest walk, Anne.

Mrs. Lov. I know my way without his instruction: I hop'd to have been quiet when once I had put on your odious formality here.

Col. Then thou wearest it out of compulsion, not choice, friend?

Mrs. Lov. Thou art in the right of it, friend.—

Mrs. Pr. Art thou not ashamed to mimic the good man? Ah! thou art a stubborn girl.

Col. Mind her not; she hurteth not me—If thou wilt leave her alone with me, I will discuss some few points with her, that may perchance soften her stubbornness, and melt her into compliance.

Ob. Pr. Content: I pray thee *put it home to her.*—Come, Sarah, let us leave the good man with her.

Mrs. Lov. [*Catching hold of Prim, he breaks loose, and Exit.*] What do you mean—to leave me with this old enthusiastical canter? Don't think, because I comply'd with your formality, to impose your ridiculous doctrine upon me.

Col. I pray thee, young woman, moderate thy passion.

Mrs. Lov. I pray thee walk after thy leader, you will but lose your labour upon me.—These wretches will certainly make me mad!

Col. I am of another opinion; the spirit telleth me I shall convert thee, Anne.

Mrs. Lov. 'Tis a lying spirit, don't believe it.

Col. Say'st thou so? Why then thou shalt convert me, my angel. [*Catching her in his Arms.*]

Mrs. Lov. [*Shrieks.*] Ah! monster, hold off, or I'll tear thy eyes out.

Col. Hush! for Heaven's sake—dost thou not know me? I am Fainwell.

Mrs. Lov. Fainwell! [*Enter old Prim.*] Oh, I'm undone! Prim here—I wish with all my soul I had been dumb.

Ob. Pr. What is the matter? Why did'st thou shriek out, Anne?

Mrs. Lov. Shriek out! I'll shriek and shriek again, cry murder, thieves, or any thing, to drown the noise of that eternal babbler, if you leave me with him any longer.

Ob. Pr. Was that all? Fie, fie, Anne.

Col. No matter, I'll bring down her stomach, I'll warrant thee—Leave us, I pray thee.

Ob. Pr. Fare thee well. [*Exit.*

Col. My charming, lovely woman! [*Embraces her.*

Mrs. Lov. What mean'st thou by this disguise, Fainwell?

Col. To set thee free, if thou wilt perform thy promise.

Mrs. Lov. Make me mistress of my fortune, and make thy own conditions.

Col. This night shall answer all my wishes.—See here, I have the consent of *three* of thy guardians already, and doubt not but Prim will make the *fourth*. [*Prim listening.*

Ob. Pr. I would gladly hear what arguments the good man useth to bend her. [*Aside.*

Mrs. Lov. Thy words give me new life, methinks.

Ob. Pr. What do I hear?

Mrs. Lov. Thou best of men, Heaven meant to bless me sure, when I first saw thee.

Ob. Pr. He hath mollified her.—Oh, wonderful conversion!

Col. Ha! Prim listening.—No more, my love, we are observed; seem to be edified, and give 'em hopes that thou wilt turn Quaker, and leave the rest to me. [*Aloud.*] I am glad to find that thou art touch'd with what I said unto thee, Anne; another time I will explain the other article unto thee; in the mean while, be thou dutiful to our friend Prim.

Mrs. Lov. I shall obey thee in every thing.

Enter OBADIAH PRIM.

Ob. Pr. Oh, what a prodigious change is here!—Thou hast wrought a miracle, friend! Anne, how dost thou like the doctrine he hath preached?

Mrs. Lov. So well, that I could talk to him for ever, methinks—I am ashamed of my former folly, and ask your pardon, Mr. Prim.

Col. Enough, enough, that thou art sorry; he is no pope, Anne.

Ob. Pr. Verily, thou dost rejoice me exceedingly, friend; will it please thee to walk into the next room, and refresh thyself—Come, take the maiden by the hand.

Col. We will follow thee.

Enter Servant.

Serv. There is another Simon Pure enquireth for thee, master.

Col. The devil there is. *[Aside.*

Ob. Prim. Another Simon Pure! I do not know him, is he any relation of thine?

Col. No, friend, I know him not—Pox take him, I wish he were in Pennsylvania again, with all my soul. *[Aside.*

Mrs. Lov. What shall I do? *[Aside.*

Ob. Pr. Bring him up.

Col. Humph! then one of us must go down, that's certain—Now impudence assist me.

H ij

Enter SIMON PURE.

Ob. Pr. What is thy will with me, friend ?

S. Pu. Didst thou not receive a letter from Amiadab Holdfast, of Bristol, concerning one Simon Pure ?

Ob. Pr. Yea, and Simon Pure is already here, friend.

Col. And Simon Pure will stay here, friend, if it be possible. *[Aside.]*

S. Pu. That's an untruth, for I am he.

Col. Take thou heed, friend, what thou dost say ; I do affirm that I am Simon Pure.

S. Pu. Thy name may be Pure, friend, but not that Pure.

Col. Yea, that Pure, which my good friend, Amiadab Holdfast, wrote to my friend Prim about ; the same Simon Pure that came from Pennsylvania, and sojourned in Bristol eleven days ; thou wouldst not take my name from me, wouldst thou ?——till I have done with it. *[Aside.]*

S. Pure. Thy name ! I'm astonish'd !

Col. At what ? at thy own assurance ?

[Going up to him, S. Pure starts back.]

S. Pu. Avaunt, Satan, approach me not ; I defy thee and all thy works.

Mrs. Lov. Oh, he'll outcant him—Undone, undone for ever. *[Aside.]*

Col. Hark thee, friend, thy sham will not take—Don't exert thy voice, thou art too well acquainted

with Satan to start at him, thou wicked reprobate—
What can thy design be here ?

Enter a Servant, and gives PRIM a Letter.

Ob. Pr. One of these must be a counterfeit, but which I cannot say.

Col. What can that letter be ? *[Aside.]*

S. Pu. Thou must be the devil, friend, that's certain, for no human power can stock so great a falsehood.

Ob. Pr. This letter sayeth that thou art better acquainted with that prince of darkness than any here.—Read that, I pray thee, Simon. *[Gives it the Col.]*

Col. 'Tis Freeman's hand—*[Reads.]* *There is a design formed to rob your house this night, and cut your throat; and for that purpose there is a man disguised like a Quaker, who is to pass for one Simon Pure; the gang, whereof I am one, though now resolved to rob no more, has been at Bristol; one of them came in the coach with the Quaker, whose name he hath taken; and, from what he hath gathered from him, formed that design, and did not doubt but he should impose so far upon you, as to make you turn out the real Simon Pure, and keep him with you. Make the right use of this. Adieu.*—Excellent well ! *[Aside.]*

Ob. Pr. Dost thou hear this ? *[To S. Pure.]*

S. Pu. Yea, but it moveth me not; that, doubtless, is the impostor. *[Pointing at the Col.]*

Col. Ah! thou wicked one—now I consider thy

face, I remember thou didst come up in the leathern conveniency with me—thou hadst a black bob wig on, and a brown camblet coat with brass buttons.—— Canst thou deny it, ha ?

S. Pu. Yea, I can, and with a safe conscience too, friend.

Ob. Pr. Verily, friend, thou art the most impudent villain I ever saw.

Mrs. Lou. Nay, then I'll have a fling at him.—
[*Aside.*] I remember the face of this fellow at Bath—Ay, this is he that pick'd my Lady Raffle's pocket in the Grove——Don't you remember that the mob pump'd you, friend ?——This is the most notorious rogue——

S. Pu. What dost provoke thee to seek my life ?—Thou wilt not hang me, wilt thou, wrongfully ?

Ob. Pr. She will do thee no hurt, nor thou shalt do me none; therefore get thee about thy business, friend, and leave thy wicked course of life, or thou may'st not come off so favourably every where.

Col. Go, friend, I would advise thee, and tempt thy fate no more.

S. Pu. Yea, I will go, but it shall be to thy confusion; for I shall clear myself: I will return with some proofs that shall convince thee, Obadiah, that thou art highly imposed upon. [*Exit.*]

Col. Then there will be no staying for me, that's certain—What the devil shall I do ? [*Aside.*]

Ob. Pr. What monstrous works of iniquity are there in this world, Simon !

Col. Yea, the age is full of vice—'Sdeath, I am so confounded, I know not what to say. [*Aside.*]

Ob. Pr. Thou art disorder'd, friend—art thou not well?

Col. My spirit is greatly troubled, and something telleth me, that tho' I have wrought a good work in converting this maiden, this tender maiden, yet my labour will be in vain: for the evil spirit fighteth against her; and I see, yea I see with the eye of my inward man, that Satan will re-buffet her again, whenever I withdraw myself from her; and she will, yea, this very damsel will, return again to that abomination from whence I have retriev'd her, as if it were, yea, as if it were out of the jaws of the fiend.

Ob. Pr. Good lack, thinkest thou so?

Mrs. Lov. I must second him. [*Aside.*] What meaneth this struggling within me? I feel the spirit resisteth the vanities of this world, but the flesh is rebellious, yea, the flesh—I greatly fear the flesh and the weakness thereof—hum——

Ob. Pr. The maid is inspir'd. [*Aside.*]

Col. Behold, her light begins to shine forth.—
Excellent woman!

Mrs. Lov. This good man hath spoken comfort unto me, yea comfort, I say; because the words which he hath breathed into my outward ears, are gone through and fix'd in mine heart, yea verily in mine heart, I say;—and I feel the spirit doth love him exceedingly—hum——

Col. She acts it to the life. [*Aside.*]

Ob. Pr. Prodigious! The damsel is filled with the spirit—Sarah.

Enter Mrs. PRIM.

Mrs. Pr. I am greatly rejoiced to see such a change in our beloved Anne. I came to tell thee that supper stayeth for thee.

Col. I am not disposed for thy food, my spirit longeth for more delicious meat!—fain would I redeem this maiden from the tribe of sinners, and break those cords asunder wherewith she is bound—hum—

Mrs. Lov. Something whispers in my ears, methinks—that I must be subject to the will of this good man, and from him only must hope for consolation.—hum.—It also telleth me, that I am a chosen vessel to raise up seed to the faithful, and that thou must consent that we two be one flesh according to the word—hum—

Ob. Pr. What a revelation is here! This is certainly part of thy vision, friend, this is the maiden's *growing into thy side*; ah! with what willingness should I give thee my consent, could I give thee her fortune too—but thou wilt never get the consent of the wicked ones.

Col. I wish I was sure of yours.

[*Aside.*

Ob. Pr. My soul rejoiceth; yea, rejoiceth, I say, to find the spirit within thee; for lo, it moveth thee with *natural* agitation—yea, with *natural* agitation, towards this good man—yea, it *stirreth*, as one may

say—yea, verily I say it *stirreth* up thy inclination—yea, as one would *stir* a pudding.

Mrs. Lov. I see, I see! the spirit guiding of thy hand, good Obadiah Prim, and now behold thou art signing thy consent;—and now I see myself within thy arms, my friend and brother, yea, I am become *bone* of thy *bone*, and *flesh* of thy *flesh*. [*Embracing him*]*—hum—*

Col. Admirably perform'd. [*Aside.*]*—*And I will take thee in all spiritual love for an helpmate, yea, for the wife of my bosom—and now methinks—I feel a *longing*—yea, a *longing*, I say, for the consummation of thy love,——yea, I do *long* exceedingly.

Mrs. Lov. And verily, verily, my spirit feeleth the same *longing*.

Mrs. Pr. The spirit hath greatly moved them both, —friend Prim, thou must consent, there's no resisting of the spirit!

Ob. Pr. Yea, the light within sheweth me, that I shall fight a good fight—and wrestle thro' those reprobate fiends, thy other guardians;—yea, I perceive the spirit will hedge thee into the flock of the righteous.—Thou art a chosen lamb—yea, a chosen lamb, and I will not push thee back—No, I will not, I say;—no, thou shalt leap-a, and frisk-a, and skip-a, and bound, and bound, I say,—yea, bound within the *fold* of the righteous—yea, even within thy *fold*, my brother.—Fetch me the pen and ink, Sarah

—and my hand shall confess its obedience to the spirit.

Col. I wish it were over.

Enter Mrs. PRIM, with pen and ink.

Mrs. Lov. I tremble lest this quaking rogue should return and spoil all. *[Aside.]*

Ob. Pr. Here, friend, do thou write what the spirit prompteth, and I will sign it. *[Col. sits down.]*

Mrs. Pr. Verily, Anne, it greatly rejoiceth me, to see thee reformed from that original wickedness wherein I found thee.

Mrs. Lov. I do believe thou art, and I thank thee—

Col. *[Reads.]* *This is to certify all whom it may concern, that I do freely give all my right and title, in Anne Lovely, to Simon Pure, and my full consent that she shall become his wife, according to the form of marriage. Witness my hand.*

Ob. Pr. That's enough, give me the pen.

[Signs it.]

Enter BETTY, running to Mrs. LOVELY.

Betty. Oh! madam, madam, here's the quaking man again, he has brought a coachman and two or three more.

Mrs. Lov. Ruin'd past redemption! *[Aside to Col.]*

Col. No, no, one minute sooner had spoil'd all; but now—here's company coming, friend, give me the paper. *[Going up to Prim hastily.]*

Ob. Pr. Here it is, Simon ; and I wish thee happy with the maiden.

Mrs. Lov. 'Tis done, and now, devil, do thy worst.

Enter SIMON PURE, and Coachman, &c.

S. Pu. Look thee, friend, I have brought these people to satisfy thee that I am not that impostor which thou didst take me for; this is the man that did drive the leathern conveyency, and brought me from Bristol—and this is——

Col. Look ye, friend, to save the court the trouble of examining witnesses—I plead guilty—ha, ha !

Ob. Pr. How's this ? Is not thy name Pure, then ?

Col. No really, sir, I only make bold with this gentleman's name——but I here give it up safe and sound ; it has done the business which I had occasion for, and now I intend to wear my own, which shall be at his service upon the same occasion at any time.——Ha, ha, ha !

S. Pu. Oh ! the wickedness of the age !

Coachman. Then you have no further need of us.

[*Exit.*

Col. No, honest man, you may go about your business.

Ob. Pr. I am struck dumb with thy impudence. Anne, thou hast deceiv'd me—and perchance undone thyself.

Mrs. Pr. Thou art a dissembling baggage, and shame will overtake thee.

[*Exit.*

S. Pu. I am grieved to see thy wife so much troubled: I will follow and console her. [Exit.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Thy brother guardians enquire for thee; here is another man with them.

Mrs. Lov. Who can that other man be?

[To the Colonel.

Col. 'Tis one Freeman, a friend of mine, whom I ordered to bring the rest of the guardians here.

Enter Sir PHILIP, TRADELOVE, PERIWINKLE, and FREEMAN.

Free. [To the Col.] Is all safe? did my letter do you service?

Col. All, all's safe! ample service. [Aside.

Sir Phil. Miss Nancy, how do'st do, child?

Mrs. Lov. Don't call me miss, friend Philip, my name is Anne, thou knowest.——

Sir Phil. What, is the girl metamorphos'd?

Mrs. Lov. I wish thou wert so metamorphos'd.— Ah! Philip, throw off that gaudy attire, and wear the clothes becoming thy age.

Ob. Pr. I am ashamed to see these men. [Aside.

Sir Phil. My age! the woman is possess'd.

Col. No, thou art possess'd rather, friend.

Trade. Hark ye, Mrs. Lovely, one word with you.

[Takes hold of her hand.

Col. This maiden is my wife, thanks to friend Prim, and thou hast no business with her.

[*Takes her from him.*]

Trade. His wife! hark ye, Mr. Freeman.

Per. Why, you have made a very fine piece of work of it, Mr. Prim.

Sir Phil. Married to a Quaker! thou art a fine fellow to be left guardian to an orphan truly—there's a husband for a young lady!

Col. When I have put on my beau clothes, Sir Philip, you'll like me better——

Sir Phil. Thou wilt make a very scurvy beau——friend——

Col. I believe I can prove it under your hand that you thought me a very fine gentleman in the Park t'other day, about thirty-six minutes after eleven; will you take a pinch, Sir Philip——One of the finest snuff-boxes you ever saw. [*Offers him Snuff.*]

Sir Phil. Ha, ha, ha! I am overjoy'd, faith, I am, if thou be'st the gentleman——I own I did give my consent to the gentleman I brought here to-day;——but whether this is he, I can't be positive.

Ob. Pr. Can'st thou not?——Now, I think thou art a fine fellow to be left guardian to an orphan.—Thou shallow brain'd shuttlecock, he may be a pick-pocket for ought thou dost know.

Per. You would have been two rare fellows to have been trusted with the sole management of her fortune, would ye not, think ye? But Mr. Trade-love and myself shall take care of her portion.——

Trade. Ay, ay, so we will—Didn't you tell me the Dutch merchant desired me to meet him here, Mr. Freeman.

Free. I did so, and I am sure he will be here, if you'll have a little patience.

Col. What, is Mr. Tradelove impatient? Nay, then, ik ben gereet voor you, heb be, Jan Van Timamtirelireletta Heer Van Fainwell, vergeeten!

Trade. Oh! pox of the name! what have you trick'd me too, Mr. Freeman?

Col. Trick'd, Mr. Tradelove! did not I give you two thousand pounds for your consent fairly? And now do you tell a gentleman he has trick'd you?

Per. So, so, you are a pretty guardian, faith, to sell your charge; what, did you look upon her as part of your stock?

Ob. Pr. Ha, ha, ha! I am glad thy knavery is found out, however—I confess the maiden over-reached me, and I had no sinister end at all.

Per. Ay, ay, one thing or other over-reached you all—but I'll take care he shall never finger a penny of her money, I warrant you;—over reach'd quoth'a! Why, I might have been over-reach'd too, if I had had no more wit: I don't know but this very fellow may be him that was directed to me from Grand Cairo t'other day. Ha, ha, ha!

Col. The very same.

Per. Are you so, sir? but your trick would not pass upon me.—

Col. No, as you say, at that time it did not, that was

not my lucky hour;—but hark ye, sir, I must let you into one secret—you may keep honest John Tradescant's coat on, for your uncle Sir Toby Periwinkle is not dead—so the charge of mourning will be saved, ha, ha, ha!—Don't you remember Mr. Pillage, your uncle's steward? Ha, ha, ha!

Per. Not dead! I begin to fear I am trick'd too.

Col. Don't you remember the signing of a lease, Mr. Periwinkle?

Per. Well, and what signifies that lease, if my uncle is not dead?—Ha! I am sure it was a lease I signed.—

Col. Ay, but it was a lease for life, sir, and of this beautiful tenement, I thank you.

[*Taking hold of Mrs. Lovely.*]

Omnes. Ha, ha, ha! Neighbours fare.

Free. So then I find you are all trick'd, ha, ha!

Per. I am certain I read as plain a lease as ever I read in my life.

Col. You read a lease, I grant you, but you sign'd this contract. [Shewing a Paper.]

Per. How durst you put this trick upon me, Mr. Freeman? Didn't you tell me my uncle was dying?

Free. And would tell you twice as much to serve my friend, ha, ha!

Sir Phil. What, the learned and famous Mr. Periwinkle chous'd too!—Ha, ha, ha!—I shall die with laughing, ha, ha, ha!

Ob. Pr. It had been well if her father had left

her to wiser heads than *thine* and *mine*, friends, ha, ha, ha!

Trade. Well, since you have outwitted us all, pray you what and who are you, sir?

Sir Phil. Sir, the gentleman is a fine gentleman. —I am glad you have got a person, madam, who understands dress and good breeding.——I was resolved she should have a husband of my choosing.

Ob. Pr. I am sorry the maiden has fallen into such hands.

Trade. A beau! nay then she is finely help'd up.

Mrs. Lov. Why, beaux are great encouragers of trade, sir, ha, ha, ha!

Col. Look ye, gentlemen—I am the person who can give the best account of myself, and I must beg Sir Philip's pardon, when I tell him, that I have as much aversion to what he calls dress and breeding, as I have to the enemies of my religion. I have had the honour to serve his majesty, and headed a regiment of the bravest fellows that ever push'd bayonet in the throat of a Frenchman; and notwithstanding the fortune this lady brings me, whenever my country wants my aid, this sword and arm are at her service.

*Therefore, my dear, if thou'lt but deign to smile,
I meet a recompence for all my toil;
Love and religion ne'er admit restraint,
And force makes many sinners, not one saint;*

*Still free as air the active mind does rove,
And searches proper objects for its love;
But that once fix'd, 'tis past the pow'r of art
To chace the dear idea from the heart:
'Tis liberty of choice that sweetens life,
Makes the glad husband, and the happy wife.*

[Exeunt omnes.]

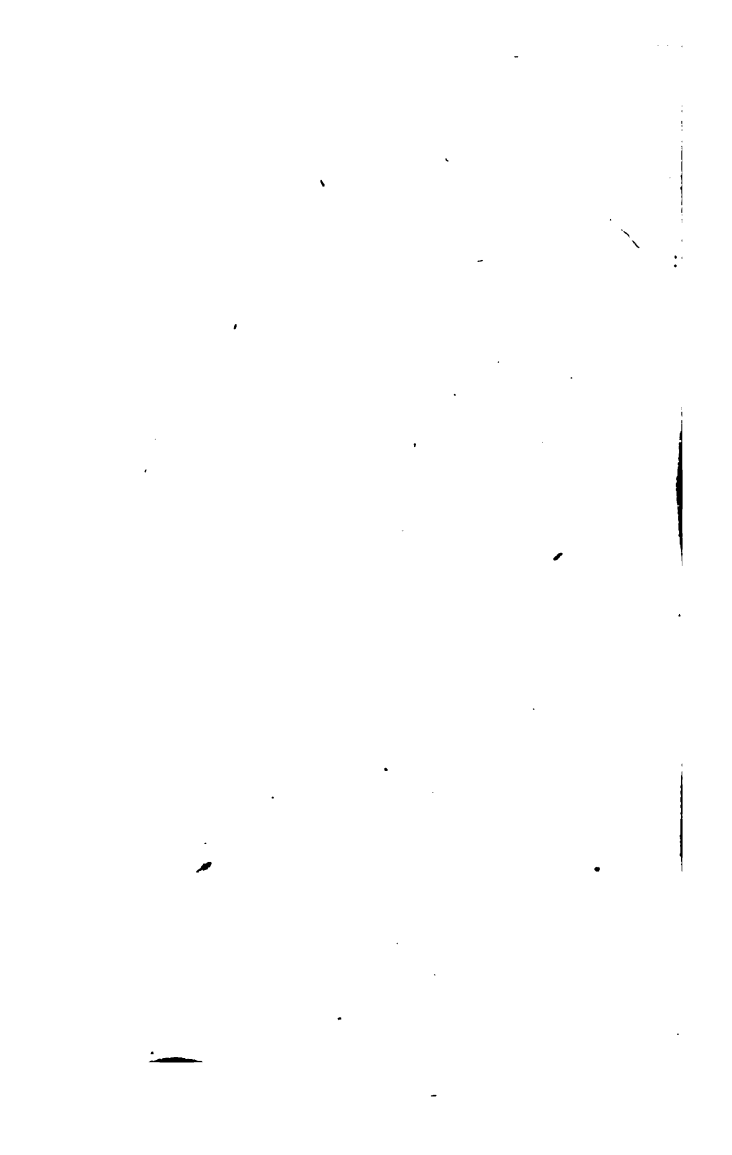
EPILOGUE.

WRITTEN BY MR. SEWELL.

WHAT new strange ways our modern beaux devise !
What trials of love-skill to gain the prize !
The heathen gods, who never matter'd rapes,
Scarce wore such strange variety of shapes :
The devil take their odious barren skulls,
To court in form of snakes and filthy bulls :
Old Jove once nick'd it too, as I am told,
In a whole lap-full of true standard gold ;
How must his godship then fair Danae warm !
In trucking ware for ware there is no harm,
Well, after all that, money has a charm.
But now, indeed, that stale invention's past ;
Besides you know that guineas fall so fast,
Poor nymph must come to pocket-piece at last.
Old Harry's face, or good Queen Bess's ruff,
Not that I'd take 'em—may do well enough ;
No——my ambitious spirit's far above
Those little tricks of mercenary love.
That man be mine, who, like the Colonel here,
Can top his character in ev'ry sphere ;
Who can a thousand ways employ his wit,
Out-promise statesmen, and out-cheat a cit :

*Beyond the colours of a trav'ler paint,
And cant, and ogle too—beyond a saint.
The last disguise most pleas'd me, I confess,
There's something tempting in the preaching dress ;
And pleas'd me more than once a dame of note,
Who lov'd her husband in his footman's coat.
To see one eye in wanton motions play'd,
The other to the heav'nly regions stray'd,
As if, for it's fellow's frailties it pray'd :
But yet I hope, for all that I have said,
To find my spouse a man of war in bed.*

THE END.



THE
SUSPICIOUS HUSBAND.

A
COMEDY,
BY **DR. HOADLY.**

ADAPTED FOR
THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,
AS PERFORMED AT THE
THEATRES-ROYAL,
DRURY-LANE AND COVENT-GARDEN.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOKS,

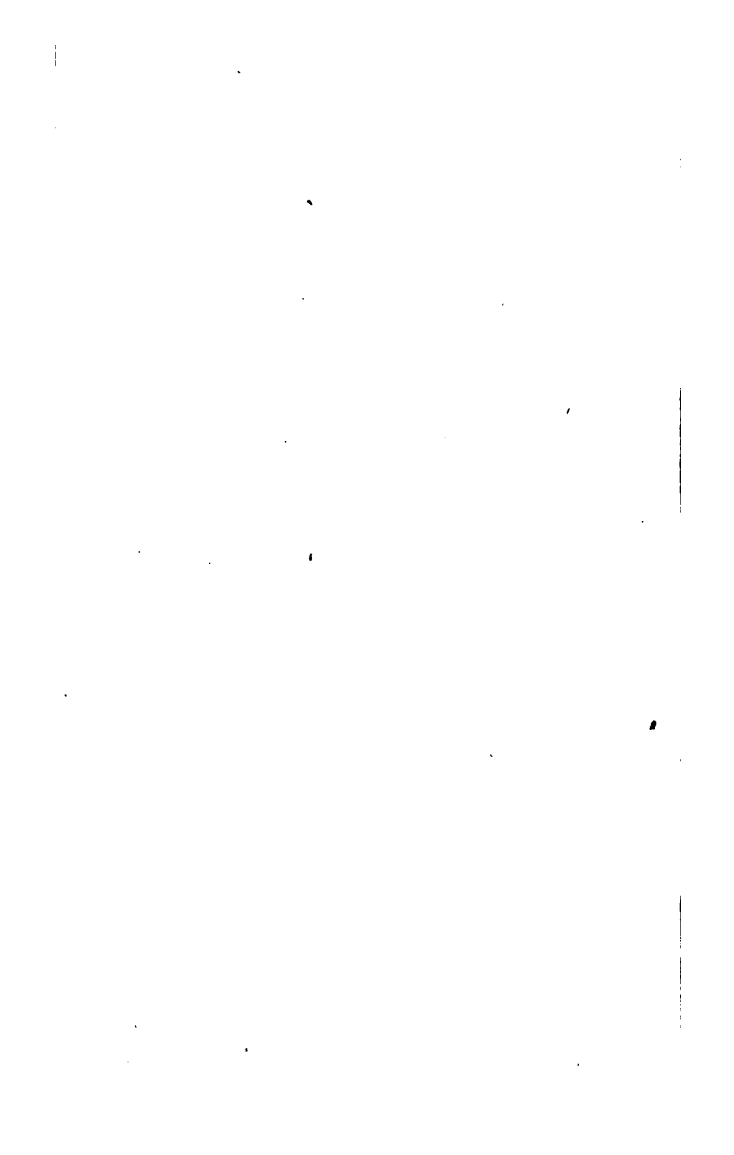
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LONDON :

Printed for the Proprietors, under the Direction of
JOHN BELL, ~~British Library~~, STRAND,
Bookseller to His Royal Highness the PRINCE of WALES.

M DCC XCI.



TO THE
K I N G.

SIR,

YOUR Majesty's goodness, in permitting your royal name to stand before the following piece, is an instance of the greatest condescension of a great mind. And this permission, after having honoured the performance of it with your royal presence, the more sensibly touches me, as it will naturally lead every one to this reflection, that so great an honour would not have been allowed it, had it not appeared free from all offence against the rules of good-manners and decency.


Thus, while your Majesty sits as a watchful arbiter of the greatest affairs that ever perplexed Europe, you can descend to the innocent amusements of life, and take a pleasure in favouring an attempt to add to their number.

We see, with joy, in your Majesty an undeniable proof, that the true greatness and lustre of a prince is founded, not upon the magnificence of pomp, and show, and power, but upon the whole tenor of a conduct formed for securing and confirming the rights

and happiness of his subjects. This being built upon public facts, will always remain plainly legible in the annals of history, when the traces of the most delicate flattery shall be all lost and gone.

When the records of our country shall barely tell the world the glorious appearance in this nation, upon a late trying occasion, and say—That upon a violent attack made upon your crown, all orders and degrees, all sects and parties amongst us, rose up as one man; not contenting themselves to offer their lives and fortunes in the sounds of formal addresses; but actually pouring out their treasures, and hazarding their persons—That your whole people did not think themselves safe without your safety; nor their religion, laws, and property secure, but in the security of your royal person and government—When this shall be told—this alone, this voice of the public, expressed in deeds, will be the highest panegyric, greater and truer praise, than all the words which invention and art can put together—But I forgot myself and my duty.

I ought not, upon the present occasion, to interrupt your cares for the public any further than to express my deep sense of your royal favour and condescension; and to send up my warmest vows, that your Majesty may long enjoy the fruits of a conduct in government, which is the security to your subjects of



all that is valuable upon earth; that you may live, through a course of many years, the delight of your happy people, the example, to all the princes around you, of political truth and justice, superior to all the little arts of fraud and perfidy; and that the succession to the crown of these realms, in your royal line, may never fail to establish and continue the blessings we enjoy to our latest posterity.

I am,

May it please your Majesty,

Your Majesty's most devoted and

Obedient subject and servant,

BENJAMIN HOADLY.

THE
SUSPICIOUS HUSBAND.

OF this Play, we think the praise has been much too great—Dr. HOADLY has been celebrated for this drama, as though it had abounded with the brilliancy of CONGREVE, or the whimsical situation of FARQUHAR.

The incidents are by no means probable—Men know the figures of their relations, without seeing their faces—and we believe at no time did even the RANGERS of the Temple climb ladders, and enter chambers, at the hazard of being committed, or even shot, for ruffians and housebreakers.

There is not one stroke of wit in the whole play; and it is a matter of concern to see comedies by prescription keeping possession of our stage, triumphing over better modern productions, which are shelved for these their predecessors, simply because our wise ELDERS saw them when they were *young*, and cannot be persuaded to like any thing *new* now they are *old*.

After GOLDSMITH, SHERIDAN, CUMBERLAND, MURPHY, and COWLEY have written, why do we hear of HOADLY's profligate pantomime?

PROLOGUE.

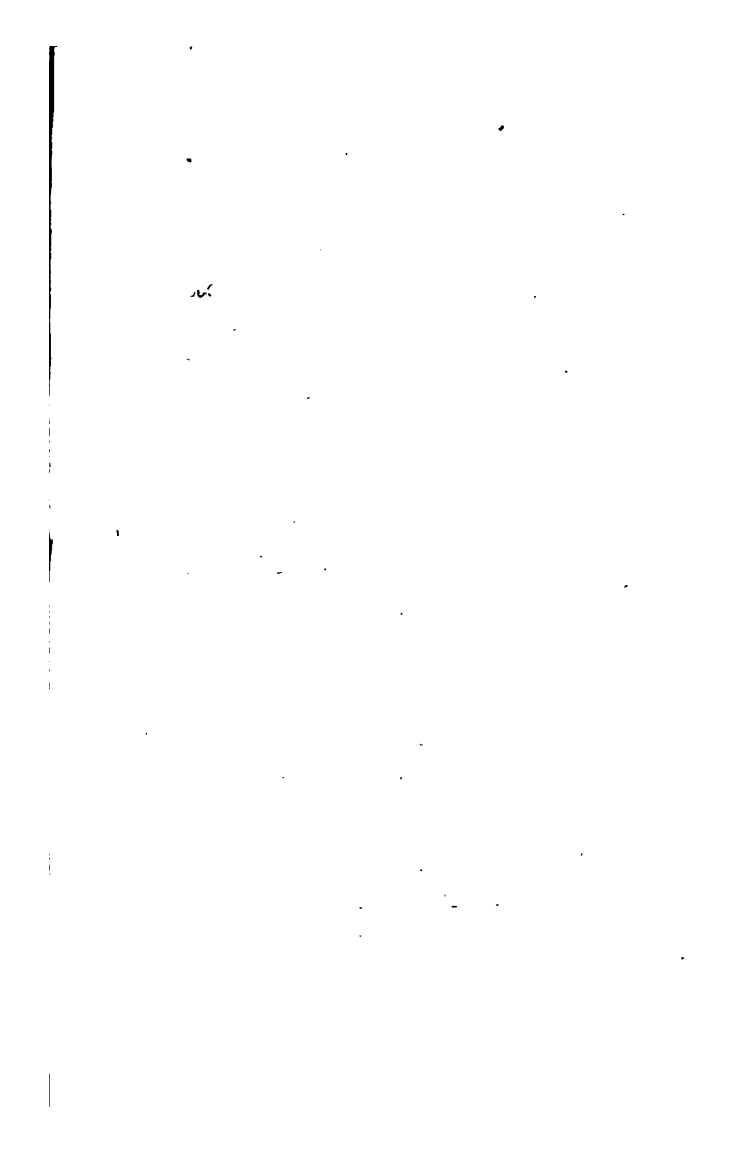
WRITTEN BY MR. GARRICK.

*WHILE other culprits brave it to the last,
Nor beg for mercy till the judgment's past ;
Poets alone, as conscious of their crimes,
Open their trials with imploring rhymes.
Thus cramm'd with flattery and low submission,
Each trite dull prologue is the bard's petition.
A stale device to calm the critic's fury,
And bribe at once the judges and the jury.*

*But what avail such poor repeated arts ?
The whimp'ring scribbler ne'er can touch your hearts ;
Nor ought an ill-tim'd pity to take place——
Fast as they rise, destroy th' increasing race :
The vermin else will run the nation o'er——
By saving one you breed a million more.*

*Though disappointed authors rail and rage
At fancy'd parties, and a senseless age,
Yet still has justice triumph'd on the stage.
Thus speaks and thinks the author of to-day,
And, saying this, has little more to say.*

*He asks no friend his partial zeal to show,
Nor fears the groundless censures of a foe :
He knows no friendship can protect the fool,
Nor will an audience be a party's tool.
'Tis inconsistent with a free-born spirit,
To side with folly, or to injure merit.
By your decision he must fall or stand,
Nor, though he feels the lash, will blame the hand.*



Dramatis Personae.

DRURY-LANE.

				<i>Men.</i>
Mr. STRICTLAND,	-	-	-	Mr. Bensley.
FRANKLY,	-	-	-	Mr. Wroughton.
BELLAMY,	-	-	-	Mr. Barrymore.
RANGER,	-	-	-	Mr. Palmer.
JACK MEGGOT,	-	-	-	Mr. Dodd.
BUCKLE,	-	-	-	Mr. Benson.
TESTER,	-	-	-	Mr. Burton.
Servant to Ranger,	-	-	-	Mr. Phillimore.
SIMON,	-	-	-	Mr. Banks.
				<i>Women.</i>
Mrs. STRICTLAND,	-	-	-	Mrs. Kemble.
CLARINDA,	-	-	-	Miss Farren.
JACINTHA,	-	-	-	Mrs. Goodall.
LUCETTA,	-	-	-	Mrs. Williams.
Landlady,	-	-	-	Mrs. Booth.
Milliner,	-	-	-	Miss Barnes.
Maid,	-	-	-	Miss Heard.

COVENT-GARDEN.

				<i>Men.</i>
Mr. STRICTLAND,	-	-	-	Mr. Farren.
FRANKLY,	-	-	-	Mr. Holman.
BELLAMY,	-	-	-	Mr. Davies.
RANGER,	-	-	-	Mr. Lewis.
JACK MEGGOT,	-	-	-	Mr. Bernard.
BUCKLE,	-	-	-	Mr. Thompson.
TESTER,	-	-	-	Mr. Blanchard.
Servant to Ranger,	-	-	-	Mr. Farley.
SIMON,	-	-	-	Mr. Evatt.
				<i>Women.</i>
Mrs. STRICTLAND,	-	-	-	Mrs. Merry.
CLARINDA,	-	-	-	Mrs. Pope.
JACINTHA,	-	-	-	Mrs. Wells.
LUCETTA,	-	-	-	Mrs. Rock.
Landlady,	-	-	-	Mrs. Platt.
Milliner,	-	-	-	Miss Francis.
Maid,	-	-	-	Miss Brangin.

Chairmen, Footmen, &c.
SCENE, London.



THE
SUSPICIOUS HUSBAND.

ACT I. SCENE I.

RANGER's Chambers in the Temple. A knocking is heard at the Door for some time; when RANGER enters, having let himself in.

Ranger.

ONCE more I am got safe to the Temple. Let me reflect a little. I have sat up all night: I have my head full of bad wine, and the noise of oaths, dice, and the damn'd tinkling of tavern bells; my spirits jaded, and my eyes sunk in my head; and all this for the conversation of a company of fellows I despise. Their wit lies only in obscenity, their mirth in noise, and their delight in a box and dice. Honest Ranger, take my word for it, thou art a mighty silly fellow.

Enter a Servant with a wig dressed.

Where have you been, rascal? If I had not had the

key in my pocket, I must have waited at the door in this dainty dress.

Serv. I was only below combing out your honour's wig.

Ran. Well, give me my cap.—*[Pulling off his wig.]* Why, how like a raking dog do you look, compared to that spruce, sober gentleman! Go, you batter'd devil, and be made fit to be seen.

[Throwing his wig to the Servant.]

Serv. Cod, my master's very merry this morning.

[Exit.]

Ran. And now for the law. *[Sits down and reads.]*

"Tell me no more, I am deceiv'd,

That Chloe's false and common;

By Heav'n I all along believ'd,

She was a very woman.

As such I lik'd, as such caress'd;

She still was constant when possess'd:

She could do more for no man."

Honest Congreve was a man after my own heart.

Servants pass over the Stage.

Have you been for the money this morning, as I ordered you?

Serv. No, sir. You bade me go before you was up; I did not know your honour meant before you went to bed.

Ran. None of your jokes, I pray; but to business. Go to the coffee-house, and inquire if there has been any letter or message left for me.

Serv. I shall, sir.

Ran. [*Repeats.*]

"You think she's false, I'm sure she's kind,
I take her body, you her mind;
Which has the better bargain?"

Oh, that I had such a soft, deceitful fair, to lull my senses to their desired sleep. [*Knocking at the door.*]
Come in.

Enter SIMON.

Oh, Master Simon, is it you? How long have you been in town?

Sim. Just come, sir, and but for a little time neither; and yet I have as many messages as if we were to stay the whole year round. Here they are, all of them, [*Pulls out a number of cards.*] and among them one for your honour.

Ran. [*Reads.*] "Clarinda's compliments to her cousin Ranger, and should be glad to see him for ever so little a time that he can be spared from the more weighty business of the law." Ha, ha, ha! the same merry girl I ever knew her.

Sim. My lady is never sad, sir. [*Knocking at the door.*]

Ran. Pr'ythee, Simon, open the door.

Enter Milliner.

Well, child—and who are you?

Mil. Sir, my mistress gives her service to you, and has sent you home the linen you bespoke.

Ran. Well, Simon, my service to your lady, and

let her know I will most certainly wait upon her. I am a little busy, Simon—and so——

Sim. Ah, you're a wag, Master Ranger, you're a wag—but mum for that. [Exit.

Ran. I swear, my dear, you have the prettiest pair of eyes—the loveliest pouting lips—I never saw you before.

Mil. No, sir! I was always in the shop.

Ran. Were you so. Well, and what does your mistress say?—The devil fetch me, child, you look'd so prettily, that I could not mind one word you said.

Mil. Lard, sir, you are such another gentleman! Why, she says, she is sorry she could not send them sooner. Shall I lay them down?

Ran. No, child. Give 'em to me—Dear little smiling angel— [Catches and kisses her.

Mil. I beg, sir, you would be civil.

Ran. Civil! Egad, I think I am very civil.

[Kisses her again.

Enter a Servant, and BELLAMY.

Serv. Sir, Mr. Bellamy.

Ran. Damn your impertinence—Oh, Mr. Bellamy, your servant.

Mil. What shall I say to my mistress?

Ran. Bid her make half a dozen more; but be sure you bring them home yourself. [Exit Milliner.] Pshaw! Pox! Mr. Bellamy, how should you like to be serv'd so yourself?

Bel. How can you, Ranger, for a minute's pleasure,

give an innocent girl the pain of heart I am confident she felt?—There was a modest blush upon her cheek convinces me she is honest.

Ran. May be so. I was resolv'd to try, however, *had you not interrupted the experiment.*

Bel. Fie, Ranger! will you never think?

Ran. Yes, but I can't be always a thinking. The law is a damnable dry study, Mr. Bellamy, and without something now and then to amuse and relax, it would be too much for my brain, I promise ye—But I am a mighty sober fellow grown. Here have I been at it these three hours, but the wenches will never let me alone.

Bel. Three hours! Why, do you usually study in such shoes and stockings?

Ran. Rat your inquisitive eyes. *Ex pede Herculem.* Egad, you have me. The truth is, I am but this moment return'd from the tavern. What, Frankly, here too!

Enter FRANKLY.

Fran. My boy, Ranger, I am heartily glad to see you; Bellamy, let me embrace you; you are the person I want; I have been at your lodgings, and was directed hither.

Ran. It is to him then I am oblig'd for this visit: but with all my heart. He is the only man, to whom I don't care how much I am oblig'd.

Bel. Your humble servant, sir.

B ij

Fran. You know, Ranger, I want no inducement to be with you. But—you look sadly—What——no merciless jade has——has she?

Ran. No, no; sound as a roach, my lad. I only got a little too much liquor last night, which I have not slept off yet.

Bel. Thus, Frankly, it is every day. All the morning his head aches; at noon he begins to clear up; towards evening he is good company; and all night he is carefully providing for the same course the next day.

Ran. Why, I must own, my ghostly father, I did relapse a little last night, just to furnish out a decent confession for the day.

Fran. And he is now doing penance for it. Were you his confessor, indeed, you could not well desire more.

Ran. Charles, he sets up for a confessor with the worst grace in the world. Here has he been reproving me for being but decently civil to my milliner. Plague! because the coldness of his constitution makes him insensible of a fine woman's charms, every body else must be so too.

Bel. I am no less sensible of their charms than you are, though I cannot kiss every woman I meet, or fall in love, as you call it, with every face which has the bloom of youth upon it. I would only have you a little more frugal of your pleasures.

Fran. My dear friend, this is very pretty talking! But let me tell you, it is in the power of the very first

glance from a fine woman utterly to disconcert all your philosophy.

Bel. It must be from a fine woman then, and not such as are generally reputed so. And it must be a thorough acquaintance with her too, that will ever make an impression on my heart.

Ran. Would I could see it once ! For when a man has been all his life hoarding up a stock, without allowing himself common necessities ; it tickles me to the soul to see him lay it all out upon a wrong bottom, and become bankrupt at last.

Bel. Well, I don't care how soon you see it. For the minute I find a woman capable of friendship, love, and tenderness, with good sense enough to be always easy, and good-nature enough to like me ; I will immediately put it to the trial, which of us shall have the greatest share of happiness from the sex, you or I.

Ran. By marrying her, I suppose ! Capable of friendship, love, and tenderness ! ha, ha, ha ! that a man of your sense should talk so. If she be capable of love, 'tis all I require of my mistress ; and as every woman, who is young, is capable of love, I am very reasonably in love with every young woman I meet. My Lord Coke, in a case I read this morning, speaks my sense.

Both. My Lord Coke !

Ran. Yes, my Lord Coke. What he says of one woman, I say of the whole sex ; “ I take their bodies, you their minds ; which has the better bargain ? ”

Fran. There is no arguing with so great a lawyer. Suppose, therefore, we adjourn the debate to some other time. I have some serious business with Mr. Bellamy, and you want sleep, I am sure.

Ran. Sleep! mere loss of time, and hinderance of business——We men of spirit, sir, are above it.

Bel. Whither shall we go?

Fran. Into the park. My chariot is at the door.

Bel. Then if my servant calls, you'll send him after us. *[Exeunt.]*

Ran. I will. *[Looking on the card.]* "Clarinda's compliments"—A pox of this head of mine; never once to ask where she was to be found. It's plain she is not one of us, or I should not have been so remiss in my inquiries. No matter; I shall meet her in my walks.

Servant enters.

Serv. There is no letter nor message, sir.

Ran. Then my things, to dress. *[Exeunt.]*

"I take her body, you her mind; which has the better
"bargain?"

SCENE II.

*A Chamber. Enter Mrs. STRICTLAND and JACINTHA,
meeting.*

Mrs. Str. Good-morrow, my dear Jacintha.

Jac. Good-morrow to you, madam. I have brought

my work, and intend to sit with you this morning. I hope you have got the better of your fatigue. Where is Clarinda? I should be glad if she wou'd come and work with us.

Mrs. Str. She work! she is too fine a lady to do any thing. She is not stirring yet—we must let her have her rest. People of her waste of spirits require more time to recruit again.

Jac. It is pity she should be ever tired with what is so agreeable to every body else, I am prodigiously pleas'd with her company.

Mrs. Str. And when you are better acquainted, you will be still more pleas'd with her. You must rally her upon her partner at Bath; for I fancy part of her rest has been disturbed on his account.

Jac. Was he really a pretty fellow?

Mrs. Str. That I can't tell; I did not dance myself, and so did not much mind him. You must have the whole story from herself.

Jac. Oh, I warrant ye, I get it all out. None are so proper to make discoveries in love, as those who are in the secret themselves.

Enter LUCETTA.

Luc. Madam, Mr. Striſtland is inquiring for you. Here has been Mr. Buckle with a letter from his master, which has made him very angry.

Jac. Mr. Bellamy said, indeed, he would try him once more, but I fear it will prove in vain. Tell

your master I am here. [*Exit Lucetta.*] What signifies fortune, when it only makes us slaves to other people?

Mrs. Str. Do not be uneasy, my Jacintha. You shall always find a friend in me: but as for Mr. Strictland, I know not what ill temper hangs about him lately. Nothing satisfies him. You saw how he received us when we came off our journey. Though Clarinda was so good company, he was barely civil to her, and downright rude to me.

Jac. I cannot help saying, I did observe it.

Mrs. Str. I saw you did. Hush! he's here.

Enter Mr. STRICTLAND.

Strick. Oh, your servant, madam! Here, I have received a letter from Mr. Bellamy, wherein he desires I would once more hear what he has to say. You know my sentiment; nay, so does he.

Jac. For Heaven's sake, consider, sir, this is no new affair, no sudden start of passion; we have known each other long. My father valued and loved him, and I am sure, were he alive, I should have his consent.

Strick. Don't tell me. Your father would not have you marry against his will; neither will I against mine: I am your father now.

Jac. And you take a fatherly care of me.

Strick. I wish I had never had any thing to do with you.

Jac. You may easily get rid of the trouble.

Striā. By listening, I suppose, to the young gentleman's proposals.

Jac. Which are very reasonable, in my opinion.

Striā. Oh, very modest ones truly; and a very modest gentleman he is that proposes them! A fool, to expect a lady of thirty thousand pounds fortune, should, by the care and prudence of her guardian, be thrown away upon a young fellow not worth three hundred a-year. He thinks being in love is an excuse for this; but I am not in love: what does he think will excuse me?

Mrs. Str. Well, but Mr. Striāland, I think the gentleman should be heard.

Striā. Well, well, seven o'clock's the time, and if the man has had the good fortune, since I saw him last, to persuade somebody or other to give him a better estate, I give him my consent, not else. His servant waits below: you may tell him I shall be at home. [*Exit Jac.*] But where is your friend, your other half, all this while? I thought you could not have breath'd a minute without your Clarinda.

Mrs. Str. Why, the truth is, I was going to see what makes her keep her chamber so long.

Striā. Look ye, Mrs. Striāland, you have been asking me for money this morning. In plain terms, not one shilling shall pass through these fingers, till you have cleared my house of this Clarinda.

Mrs. Str. How can her innocent gaiety have of-

fended you? she is a woman of honour, and has as many good qualities—

Strick. As women of honour generally have. I know it, and therefore am uneasy.

Mrs. Str. But, sir—

Strick. But, madam—Clarinda, nor e'er a rake of fashion in England, shall live in my family to debauch it.

Mrs. Str. Sir, she treated me with so much civility in the country, that I thought I could not do less than invite her to spend as much time with me in town as her engagements would permit. I little imagined you could have been displeased at my having so agreeable a companion.

Strick. There was a time when I was company enough for leisure hours.

Mrs. Str. There was a time when every word of mine was sure of meeting with a smile; but those happy days, I know not why, have long been over.

Strick. I cannot bear a rival even of your own sex. I hate the very name of female friends. No two of you can ever be an hour by yourselves, but one or both are the worse for it.

Mrs. Str. Dear Mr. Strickland—

Strick. This I know, and will not suffer.

Mrs. Str. It grieves me, sir, to see you so much in earnest: but to convince you how willing I am to make you easy in every thing, it shall be my request to her to remove immediately.

Strict. Do it—hark ye—your request?—Why yours? 'tis mine—my command—tell her so. I will be master of my own family, and I care not who knows it.

Mrs. Str. You fright me, sir—But it shall be as you please. [*In tears.*] [*Goes out.*]

Strict. Ha! have I gone too far? I am not master of myself. *Mrs. Strickland.* [*She returns.*] Understand me right. I do not mean, by what I have said, that I suspect your innocence, but by crushing this growing friendship all at once, I may prevent a train of mischief which you do not foresee. I was, perhaps, too harsh, therefore do it in your own way: but let me see the house fairly rid of her. [*Exit Strict.*]

Mrs. Str. His earnestness in this affair amazes me; I am sorry I made this visit to Clarinda; and yet I'll answer for her honour. What can I say to her? Necessity must plead in my excuse—for at all events Mr. Strickland must be obeyed. [*Exit.*]

SCENE III.

St. James's Park. Enter BELLAMY and FRANKLY.

“*Fran.* Now, Bellamy, I may unfold the secret of
 “my heart to you with greater freedom; for though
 “Ranger has honour, I am not in a humour to
 “be laugh'd at. I must have one that will bear
 “with my impertinence, sooth me into hope, and,
 “like a friend indeed, with tenderness advise me.

Bel. I thought you appeared more grave than usual.

Fran. Oh, Bellamy! my soul is full of joy, of pain, hope, despair, and ecstasy, that no word but "love is capable of expressing what I feel."

Bel. Is love the secret Ranger is not fit to hear? In my mind, he would prove the more able counsellor. And is all the gay indifference of my friend at last reduced to love?

Fran. Even so—Never was a prude more resolute in chastity and ill-nature, than I was fixed in indifference: but love has rais'd me from that inactive state above the being of a man.

Bel. Faith, Charles, I begin to think it has: but pray bring this rupture into order a little, and tell me regularly, how, where, and when.

Fran. If I was not most unreasonably in love, those horrid questions would stop my mouth at once; but as I am armed against reason—I answer—at Bath, on Tuesday, she danced and caught me.

Bel. Danced!—and was that all? But who is she? what is her name? her fortune? where does she live?

Fran. Hold! hold! not so many hard questions. Have a little mercy. I know but little of her, that's certain; but all I do know, you shall have. That evening was the first of her appearing at Bath; the moment I saw her, I resolved to ask the favour of her hand; but the easy freedom with which she gave it, and her unaffected good humour during the whole

night, gained such a power over my heart, as none of her sex could ever boast before. I waited on her home, and the next morning, when I went to pay the usual compliments, the bird was flown; she had set out for London two hours before, and in a chariot and six, you rogue!

Bel. But was it her own, Charles?

Fran. That I don't know; but it looks better than being dragg'd to town in the stage. That day and the next I spent in inquiries. I waited on the ladies who came with her; they knew nothing of her. So without learning either her name or fortune, I e'en call'd for my boots, and rode post after her.

Bel. And how do you find yourself after your journey?

Fran. Why, as yet, I own, I am but on a cold scent: but a woman of her sprightliness and gentility cannot but frequent all public places; and when once she is found, the pleasure of the chase will overpay the pains of rousing her. Oh, Bellamy! there was something peculiarly charming in her, that seem'd to claim my further acquaintance; and if in the other more familiar parts of life she shines with that superior lustre, and at last I win her to my arms, how shall I bless my resolution in pursuing her!

Bel. But if at last she should prove unworthy——

Fran. I would endeavour to forget her.

Bel. Promise me that, Charles, [*Takes his hand.*] and I allow——But we are interrupted.

Enter JACK MEGGOT.

J. Meg. Whom have we here? My old friend Frankly! thou art grown a mere antique since I saw thee. How hast thou done these five hundred years?

Fran. Even as you see me; well, and at your service ever.

J. Meg. Ha! whose that?

Fran. A friend of mine. Mr. Bellamy, this is Jack Meggot, sir, as honest a fellow as any in life.

J. Meg. Pho! pr'ythee! pox! Charles—Don't be silly—Sir, I am your humble: any one who is a friend of my Frankly's, I am proud of embracing.

Bel. Sir, I shall endeavour to deserve your civility.

J. Meg. Oh, sir!—Well, Charles; what, dumb? Come, come; you may talk, though you have nothing to say, as I do. Let us hear, where have you been?

Fran. Why, for this last week, Jack, I have been at Bath.

J. Meg. Bath! the most ridiculous place in life! amongst tradesmen's wives that hate their husbands, and people of quality that had rather go to the devil than stay at home. People of no taste; no *goust*; and for *devertimenti*, if it were not for the puppet-show, *la vertu* would be dead amongst them. But the news, Charles; the ladies—I fear your time hung heavy on your hands, by the small stay you made there.

Fran. Faith, and so I did, Jack; the ladies are

grown such idiots in love. The cards have so debauched their five senses, that love, almighty love himself, is utterly neglected.

J. Meg. It is the strangest thing in life, but it is just so with us abroad. Faith, Charles, to tell you a secret, which I don't care if all the world knows, I am almost surfeited with the services of the ladies; the modest ones I mean. The vast variety of duties they expect, as dressing up to the fashion, losing fashionably, keeping fashionable hours, drinking fashionable liquors, and fifty other such irregular niceties, to ruin a man's pocket and constitution, that foregad, he must have the estate of a duke, and the strength of a gondolier, who would list himself into their service.

Fran. A free confession truly, Jack, for one of your coat.

Bel. The ladies are obliged to you.

Enter BUCKLE, with a Letter to BELLAMY.

J. Meg. Oh, Lard, Charles! I have had the greatest misfortune in life since I saw you; poor Otho, that I brought from Rome with me, is dead.

Fran. Well, well, get you another, and all will be well again.

J. Meg. No; the rogue broke me so much china, and gnaw'd my Spanish leather shoes so filthily, that when he was dead, I began not to endure him.

Bel. Exactly at seven! run back and assure him I

will not fail. [*Exit Buckle.*] Dead! Pray, who was the gentleman?

J. Meg. This gentleman was my monkey, sir; an odd sort of a fellow that used to divert me, and pleased every body so at Rome, that he always made one in our *conversations*. But, Mr. Bellamy, I saw a servant, I hope no engagement, for you two positively shall dine with me: I have the finest *macaroni* in life. Oblige me so far.

Bel. Sir, your servant; what say you, Frankly?

J. Meg. Pho! pox! Charles, you shall go. My aunts think you begin to neglect them; and old maids, you know, are the most jealous creatures in life.

Fran. Ranger swears they can't be maids, they are so good-natured. Well, I agree, on condition I may eat what I please, and go away just when I will.

J. Meg. Ay, ay, you shall do just what you will. But how shall we do? my post-chaise won't carry us all.

Fran. My chariot is here; and I will conduct Mr. Bellamy.

Bel. Mr. Meggot, I beg pardon; I can't possibly dine out of town; I have an engagement early in the evening.

J. Meg. Out of town! No, my dear, I live just by. I see one of the dilettanti I would not miss speaking to for the universe. And so I expect you at three.

[*Exit.*]

Fran. Ha, ha, ha! and so you thought you had at least fifty miles to go post for a spoonful of macaroni.

Bel. I suppose then he is just come out of the country.

Fran. Nor that neither. I would venture a wager, from his own house hither, or to an auction or two of old dirty pictures, is the utmost of his travels to-day; or he may have been in pursuit, perhaps, of a new cargo of Venetian tooth-picks."

Bel. A special acquaintance I have made to-day.

Fran. For all this, Bellamy, he has a heart worthy your friendship. He spends his estate freely, and you cannot oblige him more, than by shewing him how he can be of service to you.

Bel. Now you say something. It is the heart, Frankly, I value in a man.

Fran. Right—and there is a heart even in a woman's breast that is worth the purchase, or my judgment has deceived me. Dear Bellamy, I know your concern for me; see her first, and then blame me if you can.

Bel. So far from blaming you, Charles, that if my endeavours can be serviceable, I will beat the bushes with you.

Fran. That I am afraid will not do. For you know less of her than I: but if in your walks you meet a finer woman than ordinary, let her not escape till I have seen her. Wheresoe'er she is, she cannot long lie hid.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II. SCENE I.

St. James's Park. Enter CLARINDA, JACINTHA, and Mrs. STRICTLAND.

Jacinta.

AY, ay; we both stand condemned out of our own mouths.

Cla. Why, I cannot but own, I never had a thought of any man that troubled me but him.

Mrs. Str. Then I dare swear, by this time, you heartily repent your leaving Bath so soon.

Cla. Indeed you are mistaken. I have not had one scruple since.

Jac. Why, what one inducement can he have ever to think of you again?

Cla. Oh, the greatest of all inducements, curiosity: let me assure you, a woman's surest hold over a man is to keep him in uncertainty. As soon as ever you put him out of doubt, you put him out of your power: but when once a woman has awaked his curiosity, she may lead him a dance of many a troublesome mile, without the least fear of losing him at last.

Jac. Now do I heartily wish he may have spirit enough to follow, and use you as you deserve. Such a spirit, with but a little knowledge of our sex, might put that heart of yours into a strange flutter.

Cla. I care not how soon. I long to meet with such

a fellow. Our modern beaux are such joint-babies in love, they have no feeling; they are entirely insensible either of pain or pleasure, but from their own dear persons; and according as we flatter, or affront their beauty, they admire or forsake ours: they are not worthy even of our displeasure; and, in short, abusing them is but so much ill-nature merely thrown away. But the man of sense, who values himself upon his high abilities; or the man of wit, who thinks a woman beneath his conversation—to see such the subjects of our power, the slaves of our frowns and smiles, is glorious indeed!

Mrs. Str. No man of sense, or wit either, if he be truly so, ever did, or ever can, think a woman of merit beneath his wisdom to converse with.

Jac. Nor will such a woman value herself upon making such a lover uneasy.

Cla. Amazing! Why, every woman can give ease. You cannot be in earnest.

Mrs. Str. I can assure you she is, and has put in practice the doctrine she has been teaching.

Cla. Impossible! Who ever heard the name of love mentioned without an idea of torment? But pray let us hear.

Jac. Nay, there is nothing to hear that I know of.

Cla. So I suspected, indeed. The novel is not likely to be long, when the lady is so well prepared for the *dénouement*.

Jac. The novel, as you call it, is not so short as you may imagine. I and my spark have been long

acquainted: as he was continually with my father, I soon perceived that he loved me; and the manner of his expressing that love was what pleased and won me most.

Cla. Well; and how was it? the old bait, flattery; dear flattery, I warrant ye.

Jac. No, indeed; I had not the pleasure of hearing my person, wit, and beauty painted out with forced praises; but I had a more sensible delight, in perceiving the drift of his whole behaviour was to make every hour of my time pass away agreeably.

Cla. The rustic! what, did he never say a handsome thing of your person?

Mrs. Str. He did, it seems, what pleas'd her better; he flatter'd her good sense, as much as a less cunning lover would have done her beauty.

Cla. On my conscience you are well match'd.

Jac. So well, that if my guardian denies me happiness (and this evening he is to pass his final sentence), nothing is left but to break my prison, and fly into my lover's arms for safety.

Cla. Heyday! O' my conscience thou art a brave girl. Thou art the very first prude that ever had honesty enough to avow her passion for a man.

Jac. And thou art the first finish'd coquette who ever had any honesty at all.

Mrs. Str. Come, come; you are both too good for either of those characters.

Cla. And my dear Mrs. Strickland here, is the first young married woman of spirit who has an ill-na-

tured fellow for a husband, and never once thinks of using him as he deserves——Good Heaven! If I had such a husband——

Mrs. Str. You wou'd be just as unhappy as I am!

Cla. But come now, confess——do not you long to be a widow?

Mrs. Str. Would I were any thing but what I am!

Cla. Then go the nearest way about it. I'd break that stout heart of his in less than a fortnight. I'd make him know——

Mrs. Str. Pray be silent. You know my resolution.

Cla. I know you have no resolution.

Mrs. Str. You are a mad creature, but I forgive you.

Cla. It is all meant kindly, I assure you. But since you won't be persuaded to your good; I will think of making you easy in your submission, as soon as ever I can. I dare say, I may have the same lodging I had last year: I can know immediately—I see my chair: and so, ladies both, adieu. [Exit.

Jac. Come, Mrs Striçtland, we shall but just have time to get home before Mr. Bellamy comes.

Mrs. Str. Let us return then to our common prison. You must forgive my ill-nature, Jacintha, if I almost wish Mr. Striçtland may refuse to join your hand where your heart is given.

Jac. Lord, madam, what do you mean?

Mrs. Str. Self-interest only, child. Methinks your

company in the country would soften all my sorrows, and I could bear them patiently.

Re-enter CLARINDA.

Cla. Dear Mrs. Strickland—I am so confus'd, and so out of breath—

Mrs. Str. Why, what's the matter?

Jac. I protest you fright me.

Cla. Oh! I have no time to recover myself, I am so frighten'd, and so pleas'd. In short then, the dear man is here.

Mrs. Str. Here—Lord—Where?

Cla. I met him this instant; I saw him at a distance, turn'd short, and ran hither directly. Let us go home.—I tell you he follows me.

Mrs. Str. Why, had you not better stay, and let him speak to you?

Cla. Ay!—But then—he won't know where I live, without my telling him.

Mrs. Str. Come then. Ha, ha, ha!

Jac. Ay, poor Clarinda!—*Allons donc.* [*Exeunt.*

Enter FRANKLY.

Fran. Sure that must be she! her shape and easy air cannot be so exactly copied by another. Now, you young rogue, Cupid, guide me directly to her, as you would the surest arrow in your quiver. [*Exit.*

SCENE II.

Changes to the Street before Mr. Strickland's door. Re-enter CLARINDA, JACINTHA, and Mrs. STRICTLAND.

Cla. Lord!—Dear Jacintha—for Heaven's sake make haste : he'll overtake us before we get in.

Jac. Overtake us! why, he is not in sight.

Cla. Is not he? Ha! Sure I have not dropt my twee—I would not have him lose sight of me neither.

[Aside.

Mrs. Str. Here he is——

Cla. In——In——In then.

Jac. *[Laughing.]* What, without your twee?

Cla. Pshah! I have lost nothing——In, in, I'll follow you. *[Exeunt into the house, Clarinda last.*

Enter FRANKLY.

Fran. It is impossible I shou'd be deceiv'd. My eyes, and the quick pulses at the heart, assure me it is she. Ha! 'tis'she, by Heav'n! and the door left open too——A fair invitation, by all the rules of love. *[Exit.*

SCENE III.

Changes to an Apartment in Mr. Strickland's House. Enter CLARINDA, FRANKLY following her.

Fran. I hope, madam, you will excuse the boldness

of this intrusion, since it is owing to your own behaviour that I am forc'd to it.

Cla. To my behaviour, sir.

Fran. You cannot but remember me at Bath, madam, where I so lately had the favour of your hand—

Cla. I do remember, sir ; but I little expected any wrong interpretation of my behaviour from one who had so much the appearance of a gentleman.

Fran. What I saw of your behaviour was so just, it would admit of no misrepresentation. I only feared, whatever reason you had to conceal your name from me at Bath, you might have the same to do it now ; and though my happiness was so nearly concerned, I rather chose to venture thus abruptly after you, than be impertinently inquisitive.

Cla. Sir, there seems to be so much civility in your rudeness, that I can easily forgive it ; though I don't see how your happiness is at all concerned.

Fran. No, madam ! I believe you are the only lady, who could, with the qualifications you are mistress of, be insensible of the power they give you over the happiness of our sex.

Cla. How vain should we women be, if you gentlemen were but wise ! If you did not all of you say the same things to every woman, we should certainly be foolish enough to believe some of you were in earnest.

Fran. Could you have the least sense of what I feel whilst I am speaking, you would know me to be in earnest, and what I say to be the dictates of a heart that admires you ; may I not say that—

Cla. Sir, this is carrying the——

Fran. When I danced with you at Bath, I was charmed with your whole behaviour, and felt the same tender admiration! but my hope of seeing you afterwards, kept in my passion till a more proper time should offer. You cannot therefore blame me now, if, after having lost you once, I do not suffer an inexcusable modesty to prevent my making use of this second opportunity.

Cla. This behaviour, sir, is so different from the gaiety of your conversation then, that I am at a loss how to answer you.

Fran. There is nothing, madam, which could take off from the gaiety with which your presence inspires every heart, but the fear of losing you. How can I be otherwise than as I am, when I know not but you may leave London as abruptly as you did Bath?

Enter LUCETTA.

Luc. Madam, the tea is ready, and my mistress waits for you.

Cla. Very well, I come—[*Exit Lucetta.*] You see, sir, I am called away: but I hope you will excuse it, when I leave you with an assurance that the business, which brings me to town, will keep me here some time.

Fran. How generous it is in you thus to ease the heart, that knew not how to ask for such a favour—I fear to offend—But this house, I suppose, is yours?

Cla. You will hear of me, if not find me here.

Fran. I then take my leave.

[*Exit.*

Cla. I'm undone!—He has me!

Enter Mrs. STRICTLAND.

Mrs. Str. Well; how do you find yourself?

Cla. I do find—that if he goes on as he has begun, I shall certainly have him without giving him the least uneasiness.

Mrs. Str. A very terrible prospect, indeed!

Cla. But I must tease him a little—Where is Jacintha? how will she laugh at me, if I become a pupil of hers, and learn to give ease! No; positively I shall never do it.

Mrs. Str. Poor Jacintha has met with what I feared from Mr. Strictland's temper; an utter denial. I know not why, but he really grows more and more ill-natur'd.

Cla. Well; now do I heartily wish my affairs were in his power a little, that I might have a few difficulties to surmount: I love difficulties; and yet, I don't know—it is as well as it is.

Mrs. Str. Ha, ha, ha! Come, the tea waits. [*Exeunt.*

Enter Mr. STRICTLAND.

Strict. These doings in my house distract me. I met a fine gentleman: when I inquired who he was; why, he came to Clarinda. I met a footman too, and he came to Clarinda. I shall not be easy till she is decamp'd. My wife had the character of a virtuous woman—and they have not been long acquainted:

but then they were by themselves at Bath——That hurts—that hurts—they must be watch'd, they must; I know them, I know all their wives, and the best of them are but hypocrites——Ha!—[*Lucetta passes over the stage.*] Suppose I bribe the maid: she is of their council, the manager of their secrets: it shall be so; money will do it, and I shall know all that passes. Lucetta!

Luc. Sir.

Strick. Lucetta!

Re-enter LUCETTA.

Luc. Sir. If he should suspect, and search me now, I'm undone. [*Aside.*]

Strick. She is a sly girl, and may be serviceable. [*Aside.*] Lucetta, you are a good girl, and have an honest face. I like it. It looks as if it carried no deceit in it——Yet, if she should be false, she can do me most harm. [*Aside.*]

Luc. Pray, sir, speak out.

Strick. [*Aside.*] No; she is a woman, and it is the highest imprudence to trust her.

Luc. I am not able to understand you.

Strick. I am glad of it. I would not have you understand me.

Luc. Then what did you call me for?—If he should be in love with my face, it would be rare sport.

[*Aside.*]

Strick. Tester, ay, Tester is the proper person.

[*Aside.*] Lucetta, tell Tester I want him.

Luc. Yes, sir. Mighty odd, this! It gives me time, however, to send Buckle with this letter to his master.

[*Aside. Exit.*]

Striā. Could I but be once well satisfied that my wife had really finished me, I believe I should be as quiet as if I were sure to the contrary: but whilst I am in doubt, I am miserable.

Enter TESTER.

Test. Does your honour please to want me?

Striā. Ay, Tester—I need not fear. The honesty of his service, and the goodness of his look, make me secure. I will trust him. [*Aside.*] Tester, I think I have been a tolerable good master to you.

Test. Yes, sir,—very tolerable.

Striā. I like his simplicity well. It promises honesty. [*Aside.*] I have a secret, Tester, to impart to you; a thing of the greatest importance. Look upon me, and don't stand picking your fingers.

Test. Yes, sir.—No, sir.

Striā. But will not his simplicity expose him the more to Lucetta's cunning? Yes, yes; she will worm the secret out of him. I had better trust her with it at once.—So—I will. [*Aside.*] Tester, go, send Lucetta hither.

Test. Yes, sir—Here she is.

Re-enter LUCETTA.

Lucetta, my master wants you.

Striā. Get you down, Tester.

Test. Yes, sir.

[*Exit.*

Luc. If you want me, sir, I beg you would make haste, for I have a thousand things to do.

Strick. Well, well ; what I have to say will not take up much time, could I but persuade you to be honest.

Luc. Why, sir, I hope you don't suspect my honesty ?

Strick. Well, well : I believe you honest.

[*Shuts the door.*

Luc. What can be at the bottom of all this ? [*Aside.*

Strick. So ; we cannot be too private. Come hither, hussy ; nearer yet.

Luc. Lord, sir ! You are not going to be rude. I vow I will call out.

Strick. Hold your tongue—Does the baggage laugh at me ? She does ; she mocks me, and will reveal it to my wife ; and her insolence upon it will be more insupportable to me than cuckoldom itself.

[*Aside.*] I have not leisure now, Lucetta—Some other time—Hush ! Did not the bell ring ? Yes, yes ; my wife wants you. Go, go, go to her. [*Pushes her out.*] There is no hell on earth like being a slave to suspicion.

[*Exit.*

SCENE IV.

The Piazza, Covent-Garden. Enter BELLAMY and JACK MEGGOT.

Bel. Nay, nay, I would not put your family into any confusion.

J. Meg. None in life, my dear, I assure you. I will go and order every thing this instant for her reception.

Bel. You are too obliging, sir; but you need not be in this hurry, for I am in no certainty when I shall trouble you; I only know that my Jacintha has taken such a resolution.

J. Meg. Therefore we should be prepared; for when once a lady has such a resolution in her head, she is upon the rack till she executes it. 'Foregad, Mr. Bellamy, this must be a girl of fire.

Enter FRANKLY.

Fran. "Buxom and lively as the bounding doe—
"Fair as painting can express, or youthful poets fancy
"cy when they love." Tol, de rol, lol!

[Singing and dancing.]

Bel. Who is this you talk thus rapturously of?

Fran. Who should it be, but—I shall know her name to-morrow.

[Sings and dances.]

J. Meg. What is the matter, ho? Is the man mad?

Fran. Even so, gentlemen; as mad as love and joy can make me.

Bel. But inform us whence this joy proceeds.

Fran. Joy! joy! my lads! She's found! my Perdita! my charmer!

J. Meg. Egad! her charms have bewitch'd the man, I think——But who is she?

Bel. Come, come, tell us, who is this wonder?

Fran. But will you say nothing?

Bel. Nothing, as I live.

Fran. Nor you?

J. Meg. I'll be as silent as the grave——

Fran. With a tomb-stone upon it, to tell every one whose dust it carries.

J. Meg. I'll be as secret as a debauched prude——

Fran. Whose sanctity every one suspects. Jack, Jack, 'tis not in thy nature; keeping a secret is worse to thee than keeping thy accounts. But to leave fooling, listen to me both, that I may whisper it into your ears, that echo may not catch the sinking sound—— I cannot tell who she is, 'faith—Tol de rol, lol——

J. Meg. Mad! mad! very mad!

Fran. All I know of her is, that she is a charming woman, and has given me liberty to visit her again——Bellamy, 'tis she, the lovely she. [*Aside.*

Bel. So I did suppose. [*To Frankly.*

J. Meg. Poor Charles! for Heaven's sake, Mr. Bellamy, persuade him to go to his chamber, whilst I prepare every thing for you at home. Adieu. [*Aside to Bellamy.*] B'ye Charles; ha, ha, ha!

Fran. Oh, love! thou art a gift worthy of a god, indeed! dear Bellamy, nothing now could add to my pleasure, but to see my friend as deep in love as I am.

Bel. I shew my heart is capable of love, by the friendship it bears to you.

Fran. The light of friendship looks but dim before the brighter flame of love: love is the spring of cheerfulness and joy. Why, how dull and phlegmatic do you shew to me now? whilst I am all life; light as

feather'd Mercury—You, dull and cold as earth and water; I, light and warm as air and fire.—These are the only elements in love's world! Why, Belamy, for shame! get thee a mistress, and be sociable.

Bel. Frankly, I am now going to——

Fran. Why that face now? Your humble servant, sir. My flood of joy shall not be stopp'd by your melancholy fits, I assure you. [Going.]

Bel. Stay, Frankly, I beg you stay. What would you say now if I really were in love?

Fran. Why, faith, thou hast such romantic notions of sense and honour, that I know not what to say.

Bel. To confess the truth then, I am in love.

Fran. And do you confess it as if it were a sin? Proclaim it aloud; glory in it; boast of it as your greatest virtue. Swear it with a lover's oath, and I will believe you.

Bel. Why then, by the bright eyes of her I love——

Fran. Well said!

Bel. By all that's tender, amiable, and soft in woman——

Fran. Bravo!

Bel. I swear, I am as true an enamorado as ever tagg'd rhyme.

Fran. And art thou then thoroughly in love? Come to my arms thou dear companion of my joys——

[They embrace.]

Enter RANGER.

Ran. Why——Hey!——is there never a wench to be got for love or money?

Bel. Pshaw! Ranger here?

Ran. Yes, Ranger is here, and perhaps does not come so impertinently as you may imagine. Faith! I think I have the knack of finding out secrets. Nay, never look so queer—Here is a letter, Mr. Bellamy, that seems to promise you better diversion than your hugging one another.

Bel. What do you mean?

Ran. Do you deal much in these paper tokens?

Bel. Oh, the dear kind creature! it is from herself.

[To Frankly.

Ran. What, is it a pair of laced shoes she wants? or have the boys broke her windows?

Bel. Hold your profane tongue!

Fran. Nay, pr'ythee, Bellamy, don't keep it to yourself, as if her whole affections were contain'd in those few lines.

Ran. Pr'ythee, let him alone to his silent raptures. But it is as I always said—your grave men ever are the greatest whoremasters.

Bel. I cannot be disobliged now, say what you will. But how came this into your hands?

Ran. Your servant Buckle and I changed commissions; he went on my errand, and I came on his.

Bel. 'Sdeath! I want him this very instant.

Ran. He will be here presently; but I demand to know what I have brought you.

Fran. Ay, ay! out with it! you know we never blab, and may be of service.

Bel. Twelve o'clock! oh, the dear hour!

Ran. Why, it is a pretty convenient time, indeed.

Bel. By all that's happy, she promises in this letter here—to leave her guardian this very night—and run away with me.

Ran. How is this?

Bel. Nay, I know not how myself—she says at the bottom—“Your servant has full instructions from Lucetta how to equip me for my expedition. I will not trust myself home with you to-night, because I know it is inconvenient; therefore I beg you would procure me a lodging, it is no matter how far off my guardian's—

Yours,

JACINTHA.”

Ran. Carry her to a bagnio, and there you may lodge with her.

Fran. Why, this must be a girl of spirit, faith!

Bel. And beauty equal to her sprightliness. I love her, and she loves me. She has thirty thousand pounds to her fortune.

Ran. The devil she has!

Bel. And never plays at cards.

Ran. Nor does any one thing like any other woman, I suppose.

Fran. Not so, I hope, neither.

Bel. Oh, Frankly, Ranger, I never felt such ease before! the secret's out, and you don't laugh at me.

Fran. Laugh at thee, for loving a woman with thirty thousand pounds? thou art a most unaccountable fellow.

Ran. How the devil could he work her up to this!

I never could have had the face to have done it. But—I know not how—there is a degree of assurance in you modest gentlemen, which we impudent fellows never can come up to.

Bel. Oh! your servant, good sir. You should not abuse me now, Ranger, but do all you can to assist me.

Ran. Why, look ye, Bellamy, I am a damnable unlucky fellow, and so will have nothing to do in this affair: I'll take care to be out of the way, so as to do you no harm; that's all I can answer for; and so—success attend you. [*Going.*] I cannot leave you quite to yourself neither; for if this should prove a round-house affair, as I make no doubt it will, I believe I may have more interest there than you; and so, sir, you may hear of me at—— [*Whispers.*]

Bel. For shame, Ranger! the most noted gaming-house in town.

Ran. Forgive me this once, my boy. I must go, faith, to pay a debt of honour to some of the greatest rascals in town. [*Exit.*]

Fran. But where do you design to lodge her?

Bel. At Mr. Meggot's—He is already gone to prepare for her reception.

Fran. The properest place in the world: his aunt will entertain her with honour.

Bel. And the newness of her acquaintance will prevent its being suspected.—Frankly, give me your hand: this is a very critical time.

Fran. Pho! none of your musty reflections now!

When a man is in love, to the very brink of matrimony, what the devil has he to do with Plutarch and Seneca? Here is your servant, with a face full of business—I'll leave you together—I shall be at the King's Arms, where, if you want my assistance, you may find me. [Exit.

Enter BUCKLE.

Bel. So, Buckle, you seem to have your hands full.

Buc. Not fuller than my head, sir, I promise you. You have had your letter, I hope.

Bel. Yes, and in it she refers me to you for my instructions.

Buc. Why, the affair stands thus.—As Mr. Strickland sees the door lock'd and barred every night himself, and takes the key up with him, it is impossible for us to escape any way but through the window; for which purpose I have a ladder of ropes.

Bel. Good—

Buc. And because a hoop, as the ladies wear them now, is not the most decent dress to come down a ladder in, I have, in this other bundle, a suit of boy's clothes, which I believe will fit her; at least, it will serve the time she wants it.—You will soon be for pulling it off, I suppose.

Bel. Why, you are in spirits, you rogue.

Buc. These I am now to convey to Lucetta—Have you any thing to say, sir?

Bel. Nothing, but that I will not fail at the hour appointed. Bring me word to Mr. Meggot's how

you go on. Succeed in this, and it shall make your fortune.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III. SCENE I.

The Street before Mr. STRICTLAND's House. Enter BELLAMY in a Chairman's coat.

Bellamy.

How tediously have the minutes pass'd these last few hours! and the envious rogues will fly, no lightning quicker, when we would have them stay.—Hold, let me not mistake—this is the house. [*Pulls out his watch.*] By heaven it is not yet the hour!—I hear somebody coming. The moon's so bright—I had better not be here till the happy instant comes. [*Exit.*]

Enter FRANKLY.

Wine is no antidote to love, but rather feeds the flame: Now am I such an amorous puppy, that I cannot walk straight home, but must come out of my way to take a view of my queen's palace by moonlight—Ay, here stands the temple where my goddess is adored—the doors open! [*Retires.*]

Enter LUCETTA.

Luc. [*Under the window.*] Madam, madam, hist! madam—How shall I make her hear?

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JACINTHA in Boy's clothes at the window.

Jac. Who is there ? What's the matter ?

Luc. It is I, madam : you must not pretend to stir till I give the word ; you'll be discovered if you do—

Fran. [*Aside.*] What do I see ? A man ! My heart misgives me.

Luc. My master is below, sitting up for Mrs. Clarinda. He raves as if he were mad about her being out so late.

Fran. [*Aside.*] Here is some intrigue or other. I must see more of this before I give further way to love.

Luc. One minute he is in the street ; the next he is in the kitchen : now he will lock her out, and then he'll wait himself, and see what figure she makes when she vouchsafes to venture home.

Jac. I long to have it over. Get me but once out of his house.

Fran. [*Aside.*] Cowardly rascal ? would I were in his place !

Luc. If I can but fix him any where, I can let you out myself—You have the ladder ready in case of necessity.

Jac. Yes, yes.

[*Exit Luc.*]

Fran. [*Aside.*] The ladder ! This must lead to some discovery ; I shall watch you, my young gentleman, I shall.

Enter CLARINDA, and Servant..

Cla. This whist is a most enticing devil. I am

afraid I'm too late for Mr. Strickland's sober hours.

Jac. Ha! I hear a noise!

Cla. No; I see a light in Jacintha's window. You may go home. [*Giving the servant money.*] I am safe.

Jac. Sure it must be he! Mr. Bellamy—Sir.

Fran. [*Aside.*] Does not he call me?

Cla. [*Aside.*] Ha! Who's that? I am frightened out of my wits—A man!

Jac. Is it you?

Fran. Yes, yes; 'tis I, 'tis I.

Jac. Listen at the door.

Fran. I will; 'tis open—There is no noise: all's quiet.

Cla. Sure it is my spark—and talking to Jacintha.

[*Aside.*

Fran. You may come down the ladder—quick.

Jac. Catch it then, and hold it.

Fran. I have it. Now I shall see what sort of mettle my young spark is made of.

[*Aside.*

Cla. With a ladder too! I'll assure you. But I must see the end of it.

[*Aside.*

Jac. Hark! Did not somebody speak?

Fran. No, no; be not fearful—'Sdeath! we are discover'd.

[*Frankly and Clarinda retire.*

Enter LUCETTA.

Luc. Hist! hist! are you ready?

Jac. Yes, may I venture?

E ij

Luc. Now is your time. He is in high conference with his privy counsellor, Mr. Tester. You may come down the back stairs, and I'll let you out.

[*Exit Lucetta.*]

Jac. I will, I will, and am heartily glad of it.

[*Exit Jac.*]

Fran. [*Advancing.*] May be so; but you and I shall have a few words before you get off so cleanly.

Cla. [*Advancing.*] How lucky it was I came home at this instant. I shall spoil his sport I believe. Do you know me, sir?

Fran. I am amazed! You here! This was unexpected indeed!

Cla. Why, I believe, I do come a little unexpectedly, but I shall amaze you more. I know the whole course of your amour: all the process of your mighty passion from its first rise——

Fran. What is all this!

Cla. To the very conclusion, which you vainly hope to effect this night.

Fran. By Heaven, madam, I know not what you mean! I came hither purely to contemplate on your beauties.

Cla. Any beauties, sir, I find will serve your turn. Did I not hear you talk to her at the window?

Fran. Her!

Cla. Blush, blush, for shame; but be assur'd you have seen the last both of Jacintha and me. [*Exit.*]

Fran. Jacintha! hear me, madam—She is gone. This must certainly be Bellamy's mistress, and I

have fairly ruin'd all his scheme. This it is to be in luck.

Enter BELLAMY, behind.

Bel. Ha! a man under the window!

Fran. No, here she comes, and I may convey her to him.

Enter JACINTHA, and runs to FRANKLY.

Jac. I have at last got to you. Let's haste away—
Oh!

Fran. Be not frighten'd, lady.

Jac. Oh! am I abus'd! betray'd!

Bel. Betray'd!—Frankly!

Fran. Bellamy!

Bel. I can scarce believe it though I see it. Draw—

Fran. Hear me, Bellamy—Lady—

Jac. Stay—do not fight!

Fran. I am innocent; it is all a mistake!

Jac. For my sake, be quiet! We shall be discovered! the family is alarm'd!

Bel. You are obeyed. Mr. Frankly, there is but one way—

Fran. I understand you. Any time but now. You will certainly be discovered! To-morrow at your chambers.

Bel. Till then, farewell. [*Exeunt Bel. and Jac.*]

Fran. Then, when he is cool, I may be heard; and the real, though suspicious, account of this matter may be believed. Yet, amidst all this perplexity, it

pleases me to find my fair incognita is jealous of my love.

Strick. [*Within.*] Where's Lucetta? Search every place.

Fran. Hark! the cry is up! I must be gone.

[*Exit Fran.*]

Enter Mr. STRICTLAND, TESTER, and Servants.

Strick. She's gone! she's lost! I am cheated! pursue her! seek her!

Test. Sir, all her clothes are in her chamber.

Ser. Sir, Mrs. Clarinda said she was in boy's clothes.

Strick, Ay, ay, I know it—Bellamy has her—Come along—Pursue her. [*Exeunt.*]

Enter RANGER.

Ran. Hark!——Was not the noise this way——No, there is no game stirring. This same goddess, Diana, shines so bright with her chastity, that egad, I believe the wenches are ashamed to look her in the face. Now I am in an admirable mood for a frolic: have wine in my head, and money in my pocket, and so am furnished out for the cannonading of any countess in Christendom. Ha! what have we here! a ladder!—this cannot be placed here for nothing—and a window open! Is it love or mischief now that is going on within? I care not which—I am in a right cue for either. Up I go, *neck or nothing*. Stay—do I not run a greater chance of spoiling sport than I do of

making any? that I hate as much as I love the other. There can be no harm in seeing how the land lies—I'll up. [*Goes up softly.*] All is hush——Ha! a light, and a woman! by all that's lucky, neither old nor crooked! I'll in——Ha! she is gone again! I will after her. [*Gets in at the window.*] And for fear of the squalls of virtue, and the pursuit of the family, I will make sure of the ladder. Now, Fortune, be my guide!

SCENE II.

Mrs. STRICTLAND's Dressing-Room. Enter Mrs. STRICTLAND followed by LUCETTA.

Mrs. Str. Well, I am in great hopes she will escape.

Luc. Never fear, madam, the lovers have the start of him, and I warrant they keep it.

Mrs. Str. Were Mr. Strictland ever to suspect my being privy to her flight, I know not what might be the consequence.

Luc. Then you had better be undressing. He may return immediately.

[*As she is sitting down at the toilet Ranger enters behind.*

Ran. Young and beautiful. [*Aside.*

Luc. I have watch'd him pretty narrowly of late, and never once suspected till this morning——

Mrs. Str. And who gave you authority to watch his actions, or pry into his secrets?

Luc. I hope, madam, you are not angry. I thought it might have been of service to you to know my master was jealous.

Ran. And her husband jealous! If she does but send away the maid, I am happy.

Mrs. Str. [*Angrily.*] Leave me.

Luc. This it is to meddle with other people's affairs.
[*Exit in anger.*]

Ran. What a lucky dog I am! I never made a gentleman a cuckold before. Now, impudence, assist me.

Mrs. Str. [*Rising.*] Provoking! I am sure I never have deserved it of him.

Ran. Oh, cuckold him by all means, madam, I am your man! [*She shrieks.*] Oh, fie, madam! if you squall so cursedly you will be discover'd.

Mrs. Str. Discover'd! What mean you, sir! do you come to abuse me?

Ran. I'll do my endeavour, madam; you can have no more.

Mrs. Str. Whence came you? How got you here?

Ran. Dear madam, so long as I'm here, what signifies how I got here, or whence I came? but that I may satisfy your curiosity, first, as to your whence came you? I answer out of the street: and to your how got you here? I say, in at the window; it stood so invitingly open, it was irresistible. But, madam — you were going to undress. I beg I may not incommode you.

Mrs. Str. This is the most consummate piece of impudence!——

Ran. For Heaven's sake have one drop of pity for a poor young fellow who long has loved you.

Mrs. Str. What would the fellow have?

Ran. Your husband's usage will excuse you to the world.

Mrs. Str. I cannot bear this insolence! Help! help!

Ran. Oh, hold that clamorous tongue, madam! Speak one word more, and I am gone, positively gone.

Mrs. Str. Gone! so I would have you.

Ran. Lord, madam, you are so hasty!

Mrs. Str. Shall I not speak, when a thief, robber, breaks into my house at midnight? Help! help!

Ran. Ha! no one hears. Now, Cupid, assist me—Look ye, madam, I never could make fine speeches, and cringe, and bow, and fawn, and flatter, and lie; I have said more to you already, than ever I said to a woman in such circumstances in all my life. But since I find you will yield to no persuasion to your good; I will gently force you to be grateful. [*Throws down his hat, and seizes her.*] Come, come, unbend that brow, and look more kindly on me!

Mrs. Str. For shame, sir! thus on my knees let me beg for mercy. [*Kneeling.*]

Ran. And thus on mine, let me beg the same.

[*He kneels, catches, and kisses her.*]

Strid. [*Within.*] Take away her sword! she'll hurt herself!

Mrs. Str. Oh, Heavens! that's my husband's voice!

Ran. [*Rising.*] The devil it is!

Strict. [*Within.*] Take away her sword, I say, and then I can close with her.

Mrs. Str. He is upon the stairs, now coming up! I am undone if he sees you.

Ran. Pox on him, I must decamp then. Which way?

Mrs. Str. Through this passage into the next chamber.

Ran. And so into the street. With all my heart. You may be perfectly easy, madam: mum's the word; I never blab. [*Aside.*] I shall not leave off so, but wait till the last moment. [*Exit Ranger.*]

Mrs. Str. So, he's gone. What could I have said, if he had been discovered!

Enter Mr. STRICTLAND driving in JACINTHA, LUCETTA following.

Strict. Once more, my pretty masculine madam, you are welcome home; and I hope to keep you somewhat closer than I have done; for to-morrow morning eight o'clock is the latest hour you shall stay in this lewd town.

Jac. Oh, sir; when once a girl is equipp'd with a hearty resolution, it is not your worship's sagacity, nor the great chain at your gate, can hinder her from doing what she has a-mind.

Strict. Oh, Lord! Lord! how this love improves a young lady's modesty!

Jac. Am I to blame to seek for happiness any

where, when you are resolved to make me miserable here ?

Striſt. I have this night prevented your making yourself so ; and will endeavour to do it for the future. I have you safe now, and the devil shall not get you out of my clutches again. I have lock'd the doors and barred them, I warrant you. So here, [*Giving her a candle.*] troop to your chamber, and to bed, whilst you are well. Go ! [*He treads on Ranger's hat.*] What's here ? a hat ! a man's hat in my wife's dressing-room ! [*Looking at the hat.*

Mrs. Str. What shall I do ? [*Aside.*

Striſt. [*Taking up the hat and looking at Mrs. Striſtland*] Ha ! by hell, I see 'tis true !

Mrs. Str. My fears confound me. I dare not tell the truth, and know not how to frame a lie ! [*Aside.*

Striſt. Mrs. Striſtland, Mrs. Striſtland, how came this hat into your chamber ?

Luc. Are you that way disposed, my fine lady, and will not trust me ? [*Aside.*

Striſt. Speak, wretch, speak——

Jac. I could not have suspected this. [*Aside.*

Striſt. Why dost thou not speak ?

Mrs. Str. Sir——

Striſt. Guilt—'tis guilt that ties your tongue !

Luc. I must bring her off, however. “ No chambermaid can help it.” [*Aside*

Striſt. My fears are just, and I am miserable——
Thou worst of women !

Mrs. Str. I know my innocence, and can bear this no longer.

Strið. I know you are false, and 'tis I who will bear my injuries no longer.

[Both walk about in a passion.]

Luc. *[To Jacintha aside.]* Is not the hat yours? own it, madam. *[Takes away Jacintha's hat, and exit.]*

Mrs. Str. What ground, what cause have you for jealousy, when you yourself can witness, your leaving me was accidental, your return uncertain; and expected even sooner than it happen'd? The abuse is gross and palpable.

Strið. Why this is true!

Mrs. Str. Indeed, Jacintha, I am innocent.

Strið. And yet this hat must belong to somebody.

Jac. Dear Mrs. Striðland, be not concerned. When he has diverted himself a little longer with it——

Strið. Ha!

Jac. I suppose he will give me my hat again.

Strið. Your hat!

Jac. Yes, my hat. You brush'd it from my side yourself, and then trod upon it; whether on purpose to abuse this lady or no, you best know yourself.

Strið. It cannot be——'tis all a lie.

Jac. Believe so still, with all my heart; but the hat is mine. *Now, sir, who does it belong to?*

[Snatches it, and puts it on.]

Strið. Why did she look so?

Jac. Your violence of temper is too much for her.

You use her ill, and then suspect her for that confusion which you yourself occasion.

Strid. Why did not you set me right at first?

Jac. Your hard usage of me, sir, is a sufficient reason why I should not be much concerned to undeceive you at all. 'Tis for your lady's sake I do it now; who deserves much better of you than to be thus exposed for every slight suspicion. See where she sits—Go to her.

Mrs. Str. [*Rising.*] Indeed, Mr. Strickland, I have a soul as much above—

Strid. Whew! Now you have both found your tongues, and I must bear with their eternal rattle.

Jac. For shame, sir, go to her, and—

Strid. Well, well, what shall I say? I forgive—
all is over. I, I, I forgive.

Mrs. Str. Forgive! What do you mean?

Jac. Forgive her! is that all? Consider, sir—

Strid. Hold, hold your confounded tongues, and I'll do any thing. I'll ask pardon—or forgive—or any thing. Good now, be quiet—I ask your pardon—there—[*Kisses her.*] For you, madam, I am infinitely obliged to you, and I could find in my heart to make you a return in kind, by marrying you to a beggar, but I have more conscience. Come, come, to your chamber. Here, take this candle.

Enter LUCETTA pertly.

Luc. Sir, if you please, I will light my young lady to bed.

Strið. No, no! no such thing, good madam. She shall have nothing but her pillow to consult this night, I assure you. So, in, in. [*The ladies take leave. Exit Jac.*] Good night, kind madam.

Luc. Pox of the jealous fool! we might both have escap'd out of the window purely. [*Aside.*

Strið. Go, get you down; and, do you hear, order the coach to be ready in the morning at eight, exactly [*Exit Lucetta.*] So, she is safe till to-morrow, and then for the country; and when she is there I can manage as I think fit.

Mrs. Str. Dear Mr. Striðland——

Strið. I am not in a humour, Mrs. Striðland, fit to talk with you. Go to bed. I will endeavour to get the better of my temper, if I can; I'll follow you. [*Exit Mrs. Str.*] How despicable have I made myself. [*Exit.*

SCENE III.

Another Chamber. Enter RANGER.

Ran. All seems hush'd again, and I may venture out. I may as well sneak off whilst I am in a whole skin. And shall so much love and claret as I am in possession of only lull me to sleep, when it might so much better keep me waking? Forbid it fortune, and forbid it love. This is a chamber, perhaps of some bewitching female, and I may yet be happy. Ha! a light! the door opens. A boy! pox on him.

[*He retires.*

Enter JACINTHA with a candle.

Jac. I have been listening at the door, and, from their silence, I conclude they are peaceably gone to bed together.

Ran. A pretty boy, faith ; he seems uneasy. [*Aside.*

Jac. [*Sitting down.*] What an unlucky night has this proved to me ! Every circumstance has fallen out unhappily.

Ran. He talks aloud. I'll listen. [*Aside.*

Jac. But what most amazes me is, that Clarinda should betray me !

Ran. Clarinda ! she must be a woman. Well, what of her ?

Jac. My guardian else would never have suspected my disguise.

Ran. Disguise ! Ha, it must be so ! What eyes she has ! what a dull rogue was I not to suspect this sooner ! [*Aside.*

Jac. Ha, I had forgot ; the ladder is at the window still, and I will boldly venture by myself. [*Rising briskly sees Ranger.*] Ha ! a man, and well drest ! Ha, Mrs. Strickland ! are you then at last dishonest !

Ran. By all my wishes she is a charming woman ? lucky rascal ! [*Aside.*

Jac. But I will, if possible, conceal her shame, and stand the brunt of his impertinence.

Ran. What shall I say to her ? No matter ; any thing soft will do the business. [*Aside.*

Jac. Who are you ?

Ran. A man, young gentleman.

Jac. And what would you have?

Ran. A woman.

Jac. You are very free, sir. Here are none for you.

Ran. Ay, but there is one, and a fair one too; the most charming creature nature ever set her hand to; and you are the dear little pilot that must direct me to her heart.

Jac. What mean you, sir? It is an office I am not accustomed to.

Ran. You won't have far to go, however. I never make my errands tedious. It is to your own heart, dear madam, I would have you whisper in my behalf. Nay, never start. Think you such beauty could ever be concealed from eyes so well acquainted with its charms?

Jac. What will become of me! If I cry out, Mrs. Striëtland is undone. This is my last resort. [*Aside.*

Ran. Pardon, dear lady, the boldness of this visit, which your guardian's care has forced me to: but I long have loved you, long have doated on that beautiful face, and followed you from place to place, though perhaps unknown and unregarded.

Jac. Here's a special fellow! [*Aside.*

Ran. Turn then an eye of pity on my sufferings; and, by Heaven, one tender look from those piercing eyes, one touch of this soft hand——

[*Going to take her hand,*

Jac. Hold, sir, no nearer,

Ran. Would more than repay whole years of pain.

Jac. Hear me; but keep your distance, or I raise the family.

Ran. Blessings on her tongue, only for prattling to me! [*Aside.*

Jac. Oh, for a moment's courage, and I shall shame him from his purpose. [*Aside.*] If I were certain so much gallantry had been shewn on my account only——

Ran. You wrong your beauty to think that any other could have power to draw me hither. By all the little loves that play about your lips, I swear——

Jac. You came to me, and me alone.

Ran. By all the thousand graces that inhabit there, you, and only you, have drawn me hither.

Jac. Well said—*Could I but believe you—*

Ran. By Heaven she comes! Ah, honest Ranger, I never knew thee fail. [*Aside.*

Jac. Pray, sir, where did you leave this hat?

Ran. That hat! that hat—'tis my hat—I dropt it in the next chamber as I was looking for yours.

Jac. How mean and despicable do you look now!

Ran. So, so! I am in a pretty pickle! [*Aside.*

Jac. You know by this, that I am acquainted with every thing that has passed within; and how ill it agrees with what you have professed to me. Let me advise you, sir, to begone immediately: through that window you may easily get into the street. One scream of mine, the least noise at that door, will wake the house.

Ran. Say you so ?

[*Aside.*

Jac. Believe me, sir, an injur'd husband is not so easily appeas'd, and a suspected wife that is jealous of her honour——

Ran. Is the devil, and so let's have no more of her. Look ye, madam, [*Getting between the door and her.*] I have but one argument left, and that is a strong one. Look on me well ; I am as handsome, a strong, well made fellow as any about town ; and, since we are alone, as I take it, we can have no occasion to be more private.

[*Going to lay hold of her.*

Jac. I have a reputation, sir, and will maintain it.

Ran. You have a bewitching pair of eyes.

Jac. Consider my virtue.

[*Struggling.*

Ran. Consider your beauty and my desires.

Jac. If I were a man, you dar'd not use me thus.

Ran. I should not have the same temptation.

Jac. Hear me, sir, I will be heard. [*Breaks from him.*] There is a man who will make you repent this usage of me. Oh, Bellamy ! where art thou now ?

Ran. Bellamy !

Jac. Were he here, you durst not thus affront me.

[*Bursting into tears.*

Ran. His mistress, on my soul ! [*Aside.*] You can love, madam ; you can love, I find. Her tears affect me strangely.

[*Aside,*

Jac. I am not ashamed to own my passion for a man of virtue and honour. I love and glory in it.

Ran. Oh, brave ! and you can write letters, you

can. "I will not trust myself home with you this evening, because I know it is inconvenient."

Jac. Ha!

Ran. "Therefore I beg you would procure me a lodging; 'tis no matter how far off my guardian's. Yours, Jacintha."

Jac. The very words of my letter! I am amaz'd! Do you know Mr. Bellamy?

Ran. There is not a man on earth I have so great a value for: and he must have some value for me too, or he would never have shewn me your pretty epistle; think of that, fair lady. The ladder is at the window, and so, madam, I hope delivering you safe into his arms, will, in some measure, expiate the crime I have been guilty of to you.

Jac. Good Heaven! How fortunate is this!

Ran. I believe I make myself appear more wicked than I really am. For, damn me, if I do not feel more satisfaction in the thoughts of restoring you to my friend, than I could have pleasure in any favour your bounty could have bestowed. *Let any other rake lay his hand upon his heart and say the same.*

Jac. Your generosity transports me.

Ran. Let us lose no time then; the ladder's ready. Where was you to lodge?

Jac. At Mr. Meggot's.

Ran. At my friend Jacky's! better and better still.

Jac. Are you acquainted with him too?

Ran. Ay, ay; why, did I not tell you at first that I was one of your old acquaintance? I know all about

you, you see ; though the devil fetch me if ever I saw you before. Now, madam, give me your hand.

Jac. And now, sir, have with you.

Ran. Then thou art a girl of spirit. And though I long to hug you for trusting yourself with me, I will not beg a single kiss, till Bellamy himself shall give me leave. He must fight well that takes you from me. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV. SCENE I.

The Piazza. Enter BELLAMY and FRANKLY.

Bellamy.

PSHA ! what impertinent devil put it into your head to meddle with my affairs ?

Fran. You know I went thither in pursuit of another.

Bel. I know nothing you had to do there at all.

Fran. I thought, Mr. Bellamy, you were a lover.

Bel. I am so ; and therefore should be forgiven this sudden warmth.

Fran. And therefore should forgive the fond impertinence of a lover.

Bel. Jealousy, you know, is as natural an incident to love——

Fran. As curiosity. By one piece of silly curiosity I have gone nigh to ruin both myself and you ; let not then your jealousy complete our misfortunes. I

fear I have lost a mistress as well as you. Then let us not quarrel. All may come right again.

Bel. It is impossible. She is gone, removed forever from my sight: she is in the country by this time.

Fran. How did you lose her after we parted?

Bel. By too great confidence. When I got her to my chair, the chairmen were not to be found. And, safe as I thought in our disguise, I actually put her into the chair, when Mr. Strickland and his servants were in sight; which I had no sooner done, than they surrounded us, overpowered me, and carried her away.

Fran. Unfortunate indeed! Could you not make a second attempt?

Bel. I had designed it; but when I came to the door, I found the ladder removed; and hearing no noise, seeing no lights, nor being able to make any body answer, I concluded all attempts as impracticable as I now find them.—Ha! I see Lucetta coming. Then they may be still in town.

Enter LUCETTA.

Lucetta, welcome! what news of Jacintha?

Luc. News, sir! you fright me out of my senses! Why, is she not with you?

Bel. What do you mean? With me! I have not seen her since I lost her last night.

Luc. Good Heav'n! then she is undone for ever.

Fran. Why, what's the matter?

Bel. Speak out—I'm all amazement.

Luc. She is escap'd, without any of us knowing how. Nobody miss'd her till morning. We all thought she went away with you. But Heaven knows now what may have happened.

Bel. Somebody must have accompanied her in her flight.

Luc. We know of nobody: we are all in confusion at home. My master swears revenge on you. My mistress says a stranger has her.

Bel. A stranger!

Luc. But Mrs. Clarinda——

Bel. Clarinda! who is she?

Luc. [*To Frankly.*] The lady, sir, who you saw at our house last night.

Fran. Ha! what of her?

Luc. She says, she is sure one Frankly is the man; she saw them together, and knows it to be true.

Fran. Damn'd fortune! [*Aside.*]

Luc. Sure this is not Mr. Frankly.

Fran. Nothing will convince him now. [*Aside.*]

Bel. [*Looking at Frankly.*] Ha! 'tis true!—I see it is true. [*Aside.*] Lucetta, run up to Buckle, and take him with you to search wherever you can. [*Puts her out.*] Now, Mr. Frankly, I have found you.—You have used me soo ill, that you force me to forget you are my friend.

Fran. What do you mean?

Bel. Draw.

Fran. Are you mad? By Heavens, I am innocent.

Bel. I have heard you, and will no longer be impos'd on—Defend yourself.

Fran. Nay, if you are so hot, I draw to defend myself, as I would against a madman.

Enter RANGER.

Ran. What the devil, swords at noon-day! Have among you, faith! [*Parts them.*] What's here, Bellamy—Yes, egad, you are Bellamy, and you are Frankly, put up, both of you—or else—I am a devilish fellow when once my sword is out.

Bel. We shall have a time——

Ran. [*Pushing Bellamy one way.*] A time for what?

Fran. I shall be always as ready to defend my innocence as now.

Ran. [*Pushing Frankly the other way.*] Innocence I ay, to be sure—at your age—a mighty innocent fellow, no doubt. But what, in the name of common sense, is it that ails you both? are you mad? The last time I saw you, you were hugging and kissing; and now you are cutting one another's throats—I never knew any good come of one fellow's beslavering another—But I shall put you into better humour, I warrant you——Bellamy, Frankly, listen both of you—Such fortune—such a scheme——

Bel. Pr'ythee, leave fooling. What, art drunk?

Fran. He is always so, I think.

Ran. And who gave you the privilege of thinking? Drunk! no; I am not drunk.—Topsy, perhaps, with my good fortune—merry, and in spirits—though I

have not fire enough to run my friend through the body. Not drunk, though Jack Meggot and I have boxed it about——Champaign was the word for two whole hours by Shrewsbury clock.

Bel. Jack Meggot!—Why, I left him at one, going to bed.

Ran. That may be, but I made shift to rouse him and his family by four this morning. Ounds, I pick'd up a wench, and carried her to his house.

Bel. Ha!

Ran. Such a variety of adventures—Nay, you shall hear——But, before I begin, Bellamy, you shall promise me half a dozen kisses before hand: for the devil fetch me if that little jade, Jacintha, would give me one, though I pressed hard.

Bel. Who, Jacintha? press to kiss Jacintha?

Ran. Kiss her! ay; why not? is she not a woman, and made to be kiss'd?

Bel. Kiss her——I shall run distracted?

Ran. How could I help it, when I had her alone, you rogue, in her bed-chamber at midnight! if I had been to be sacrificed, I should have done it.

Bel. Bed-chamber, at midnight! I can hold no longer——Draw.

Fran. Be easy, Bellamy. [Interposing.]

Bel. He has been at some of his damn'd tricks with her.

Fran. Hear him out.

Ran. 'Sdeath, how could I know she was his mistress? But I tell this story most miserably. I should

have told you first, I was in another lady's chamber. By the lord, I got in at the window by a ladder of ropes.

Frag. Ha! Another lady?

Ran. Another: and stole in upon her whilst she was undressing; beautiful as an angel, blooming and young——

Fran. What, in the same house?

Bel. What is this to Jacintha? Ease me of my pain.

Ran. Ay, ay, in the same house, on the same floor. The sweetest, little angel—But I design to have another touch with her.

Fran. 'Sdeath! but you shall have a touch upon me first.

Bel. Stay, Frankly. [Interposing.]

Ran. Why, what strange madness has possess'd you both, that nobody must kiss a pretty wench but yourselves.

Bel. What became of Jacintha?

Ran. Ounds! what have you done, that you must monopolize kissing?

Fran. Pr'ythee, honest Ranger, ease me of the pain I am in. Was her name Clarinda?

Bel. Speak in plain words, where Jacintha is, where to be found. Dear boy, tell me.

Ran. Ay, now it is honest Ranger; and, dear boy, tell me—and a minute ago, my throat was to be cut—I could find in my heart not to open my lips. But here comes Jack Meggot, who will let you into all the secret, though he design'd to keep it from you,

in half the time that I can, though I had ever so great a mind to tell it you.

Enter JACK MEGGOT.

J. Meg. So, save ye, save ye, lads! we have been frighten'd out of our wits for you. Not hearing of Mr. Bellamy, poor Jacintha is ready to sink for fear of any accident.

Bel. Is she at your house?

J. Meg. Why, did not you know that? We dispatch'd Master Ranger to you three hours ago.

Ran. Ay, plague! but I had business of my own, so I could not come—Hark ye, Frankly, is your girl, maid, wife, or widow?

Fran. A maid, I hope.

Ran. The odds are against you, Charles—But mine is married, you rogue, and her husband jealous—The devil is in it if I do not reap some reward for my last night's service.

Bel. He has certainly been at Mrs. Strickland herself. But, Frankly, I dare not look on you.

Fran. This one embrace cancels all thoughts of enmity.

Bel. Thou generous man!—But I must haste to ease Jacintha of her fears. *[Exit.]*

Fran. And I to make up matters with Clarinda.

[Exit.]

Ran. And I to some kind wench or other, Jack. But where shall I find her, Heaven knows. And so, my service to your monkey.

J. Meg. Adieu, rattlepate.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

The Hall of Mr. STRICTLAND's House. Enter Mrs. STRICTLAND and CLARINDA.

Mrs. Str. But, why in such a hurry, my dear; stay till your servants can go along with you.

Cla. Oh, no matter; they'll follow with my things. It is but a little way off, and my chair will guard me. After my staying out so late last night, I am sure Mr. Strictland will think every minute an age whilst I am in his house.

Mrs. Str. I am as much amaz'd at his suspecting your innocence as my own; and every time I think of it, I blush at my present behaviour to you.

Cla. No ceremony, dear child.

Mrs. Str. No, Clarinda, I am too well acquainted with your good humour. But I fear, in the eye of a malicious world, it may look like a confirmation of his suspicion.

Cla. My dear, if the world will speak ill of me for the little innocent gaiety, which I think the peculiar happiness of my temper, I know no way to prevent it, and am only sorry the world is so ill-natured: but I shall not part with my mirth, I assure them, so long as I know it innocent. I wish, my dear, this may be the greatest uneasiness your husband's jealousy ever gives you.

Mrs. Str. I hope he never again may have such occasion as he had last night.

Cla. You are so unfashionable a wife.—Why, last night's accident would have made half the wives in London easy for life. Has not his jealousy discover'd itself openly? And are not you innocent? There is nothing but your foolish temper that prevents his being absolutely in your power.

Mrs. Str. Clarinda, this is too serious an affair to laugh at. Let me advise you, take care of Mr. Frankly, observe his temper well, and if he has the least taint of jealousy, cast him off, and never trust to keeping him in your power.

C/a. You will hear little more of Frankly, I believe. Here is Mr. Strickland.

Enter Mr. STRICTLAND and LUCETTA.

Strick. Lucetta says you want me, madam.

Cla. I trouble you, sir, only that I might return you thanks for the civilities I have receiv'd in your family, before I took my leave.

Strick. Keep them to yourself, dear madam. As it is at my request that you leave my house, your thanks upon that occasion are not very desirable.

Cla. Oh, sir, you need not fear. My thanks were only for your civilities. They will not overburden you. But I'll conform to your humour, sir, and part with as little ceremony——

Strick. As we met.

Cl. The brute! [*Aside.*] My dear, good b'ye, we may meet again. [*To Mrs. Strictland.*

StriA. If you dare trust me with your hand.

Cl. Lucetta, remember my instructions. Now, sir, have with you. [*Mr. Strictland leads Clarinda out.*

Mrs. Str. Are her instructions cruel or kind, Lucetta? For I suppose they relate to Mr. Frankly.

Luc. Have you a mind to try if I can keep a secret as well as yourself, madam? But I will shew you I am fit to be trusted by keeping this, though it signifies nothing.

Mrs. Str. This answer is not so civil, I think.

Luc. I beg pardon, madam, I meant it not to offend.

Mrs. Str. Pray let us have no more such. I neither desire, nor want your assistance.

Re-enter Mr. STRICTLAND.

StriA. She is gone; I feel myself somewhat easier already. Since I have begun the day with gallantry, madam, shall I conduct you up?

Mrs. Str. There is something, sir, which gives you secret uneasiness. I wish——

StriA. Perhaps so, madam; and perhaps it may soon be no secret at all. [*Leads her out.*

Luc. Would I were once well settled with my young lady; for, at present, this is but an odd sort of a queer family. Last night's affair puzzles me. A hat there was that belong'd to none of us, that's certain; madam was in a fright, that is as certain; and

I brought all off. Jacintha escap'd, no one of us knows how. The good man's jealousy was yesterday groundless; yet to-day, in my mind, he is very much in the right. Mighty odd, all this!—Somebody knocks. If this should be Clarinda's spark, I have an odd message for him too. [*She opens the door.*]

Enter FRANKLY.

Fran. So, my pretty handmaid, meeting with you gives me some hopes. May I speak with Clarinda?

Luc. Whom do you want, sir?

Fran. Clarinda, child. The young lady I was admitted to yesterday.

Luc. Clarinda!—No such person lives here, I assure you.

Fran. Where then?

Luc. I don't know indeed, sir.

Fran. Will you inquire within?

Luc. Nobody knows in this house, sir, you will find.

Fran. What do you mean? She is a friend of Jacintha's, your lady. I will take my oath she was here last night; and you yourself spoke of her being here this morning—Not know!

Luc. No; none of us know. She went away of a sudden—no one of us can imagine whither.

Fran. Why, faith, child, thou hast a tolerable face, and hast deliver'd this denial very handsomely: but let me tell you, your impertinence this morning had lik'd to have cost me my life; now, therefore, make me amends. I come from your young mistress; I

come from Mr. Bellamy; I come with my purse full of gold, that persuasive rhetoric, to win you to let me see and speak to this Clarinda once again.

Luc. She is not here, sir.

Fran. Direct me to her.

Luc. No, I can't do that neither.

Enter Mr. STRICTLAND behind.

Strið. I heard a knocking at the door, and a man's voice—Ha! *[Aside.*

Fran. Deliver this letter to her.

Strið. By all my fears, a letter! *[Aside.*

Luc. I don't know but I may be tempted to do that.

Fran. Take it then—and with it this.

[Kisses her, and gives her money.]

Strið. Um! there are two bribes in a breath! What a jade she is! *[Aside.*

Luc. Ay; this gentleman understands reason.

Fran. And be assured you oblige your mistress while you are serving me.

Strið. Her mistress!—Damn'd sex! and damn'd wife, thou art an epitome of that sex! *[Aside.*

Fran. And if you can procure me an answer, your fee shall be enlarg'd. *[Exit.*

Luc. The next step is to get her to read this letter.

Strið. *[Snatches the letter.]* No noise—but stand silent there, whilst I read this. *[Breaks it open and drops the case.]* “Madam, the gaiety of a heart happy as mine was yesterday, may, I hope, easily excuse the unseasonable visit I made your house last night.”

—Death and the devill! confusion! I shall run distracted. It is too much!—There was a man then to whom the hat belong'd; and I was gull'd, abused, cheated, impos'd on by a chit, a child—Oh, woman, woman!—But I will be calm, search it to the bottom, and have a full revenge——

Luc. [*Aside.*] So, here's fine work! He'll make himself very ridiculous though.

Strid. [*Reads on.*] “I know my innocence will appear so manifestly, that I need only appeal to the lady who accompanied you at Bath.” Your very humble servant, good, innocent, fine Madam Clarinda. “And I do not doubt but her good-nature,” bawd! bawd! “will not let you persist in injuring your obedient humble servant, CHARLES FRANKLY.”

Now, who can say my jealousy lack'd foundation, or my suspicion of fine madam's innocent gaiety was unjust?—Gaiety! why ay, 'twas gaiety brought him hither. Gaiety makes her a bawd—My wife may be a whore in gaiety. What a number of things become fashionable under the notion of gaiety—What, you receiv'd this epistle in gaiety too; and were to deliver it to my wife, I suppose, when the gay fit came next upon her?—Why, you impudent young strumpet, do you laugh at me?

Luc. I wou'd, if I dar'd, laugh heartily.—Be pleas'd, sir, only to look at that piece of paper that lies there.

Strid. Ha!

Luc. I have not touched it, sir. It is the case that letter came in, and the direction will inform you whom I was to deliver it to.

Striſ. This is directed to Clarinda!

Luc. Oh, is it so? Now read it over again, and all your foolish doubts will vanish.

Striſ. I have no doubts at all. I am satisfied that you, Jacintha, Clarinda, my wife, all are——

Luc. Lud! Lud! you will make a body mad.

Striſ. Hold your impertinent tongue.

Luc. You'll find the thing to be just as I say, sir.

Striſ. Begone. [*Exit Lucetta.*] They must be poor at the work, indeed, if they did not lend one another their names. 'Tis plain, 'tis evident, and I am miserable. But for my wife, she shall not stay one night longer in my house. Separation, shame, contempt, shall be her portion. I am determined in the thing; and when once it is over, I may, perhaps, be easy.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III.

The Street. CLARINDA brought in a Chair, RANGER following.

Ran. Harkye, chairman! damn your confounded trot. Go slower.

Cla. Here, stop.

Ran. By Heavens! the monsters hear reason and obey.

Cla. [*Letting down the window.*] What troublesome fellow was that ?

1 Chair. Some rake, I warrant, that cannot carry himself home, and wants us to do it for him.

Cla. There——And pray do you take care I be not troubled with him. [*Goes in.*]

Ran. That's as much as to say now, pray follow me. Madam, you are a charming woman, and I will do it—

1 Chair. Stand off, sir.

Ran. Pr'ythee, honest fellow—what—what writing is that ? [*Endeavouring to get in.*]

2 Chair. You come not here.

Ran. Lodgings to be let : a pretty convenient inscription, and the sign of a good modest family. There may be lodgings for gentlemen as well as ladies. Harkye, rogues ; I'll lay you all the silver I have in my pocket, there it is, I get in there in spite of your teeth, ye pimps.

[*Throws down the money, and goes in.*]

[*Within.*] *Chair, chair, chair !*

Chair. *Who calls chair ?*

“ *1 Chair.* What, have you let the gentleman in ?

“ *2 Chair.* I'll tell you what, partner, he certainly slipt by whilst we were picking up the money.

“ Come, take up.”

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

CLARINDA's Lodgings. Enter CLARINDA, and Maid following.

Maid. Bless me, madam, you seem disorder'd ; what's the matter ?

Cla. Some impertinent fellow follow'd the chair, and I am afraid they let him in. [A noise between Ranger and Landlady.] I should certainly know that voice. [Ranger talks with the Landlady.] My madcap cousin Ranger, as I live. I am sure he does not know me.— If I cou'd but hide my face now, what sport I shou'd have ! A mask, a mask ! Run and see if you can find a mask.

Maid. I believe there is one above.

Cla. Run, run, and fetch it. [Exit Maid.] Here he comes.

Enter RANGER and Landlady.

How unlucky this is ! [Turning from them.]

Land. What's your business here, unmannerly sir ?

Ran. Well, let's see these lodgings that are to be let. Gad, a very pretty neat tenement—But hark-ye, is it real and natural, all that, or only patched up and new-painted this summer-season, against the town fills ?

Land. What does the saucy fellow mean with his double tenders here ? Get you down—

Enter Maid with a mask.

Maid. Here is a very dirty one. [*Aside to Clarinda.*

Cla. No matter—now we shall see a little what he would be at. [*Aside.*

Land. This is an honest house. For all your lac'd waistcoat, I'll have you thrown down neck and heels.

Ran. Pho! not in such a hurry, good old lady—A mask! nay, with all my heart. It saves a world of blushing. Have you ne'er a one for me!—I am apt to be asham'd myself on these occasions.

Land. Get you down, I say——

Ran. Not if I guess right, old lady. Madam, [*To Clarinda, who makes signs to the Landlady to retire.*] look ye there now! that a woman should live to your age, and know so little of the matter. Begone. [*Exit Landlady.*] By her forwardness this should be a whore of quality. My boy, Ranger, thou art in luck to-day. She won't speak, I find—then I will. [*Aside.*] Delicate lodgings truly, madam; and very neatly furnish'd—A very convenient room this, I must needs own, to entertain a mix'd company. But, my dear charming creature, does not that door open to a more commodious apartment for the happiness of a private friend, or so? The prettiest brass lock—Fast, um; that won't do. 'Sdeath, you are a beautiful woman; I am sure you are. Pr'ythee let me see your face. It is your interest, child—The longer you delay, the more I shall expect. Therefore, [*Taking her hand.*] my dear, soft, kind, new acquaintance, thus let me

take your hand, and whilst you gently with the other let day-light in upon me, let me softly hold you to me, that with my longing lips I may receive the warmest, best impression. [*She unmask's.*] Clarinda!

Cla. Ha, ha! your servant, cousin Ranger—Ha, ha, ha!

Ran. Oh, your humble servant, madam. You had like to have been beholden to your mask, cousin—I must brazen it out. [*Aside.*]

Cla. Ha, ha, ha! You were not so happy in your disguise, sir. The pretty stagger in your gait, that happy disposition of your wig, the genteel negligence of your whole person, and those pretty flowers of modish gallantry, made it impossible to mistake you, my sweet coz. Ha, ha!

Ran. Oh, I knew you too, but I fancied you had taken a particular liking to my person, and had a mind to sink the relation under that little piece of black velvet! and, egad, you never find me behind hand in a frolic. But since it is otherwise, my merry, good-humoured cousin, I am as heartily glad to see you in town, as I should be to meet any of my old bottle acquaintance.

Cla. And on my side, I am as happy in meeting your worship, as I should be in a rencounter with e'er a petticoat in Christendom.

Ran. And if you have any occasion for a dangling gallant to Vauxhall, Ranelagh, or even the poor neglected Park, you are so unlike the rest of your vir-

tuous sisters of the petticoat, that I will venture myself with you.

Cla. Take care what you promise ; for who knows but this face, you were pleased to say so many pretty things of before you saw it, may raise so many rivals among your kept mistresses, and reps of quality——

Ran. Hold, hold ! a truce with your satire, sweet coz ; or if scandal must be the topic of every virtuous woman's conversation, call for your tea-water, and let it be in its proper element. Come, your tea, your tea.

Enter Maid.

Cla. With all my heart——Who's there ? Get tea——upon condition that you stay till it comes.

Ran. That is according as you behave, madam.

Cla. Oh, sir, I am very sensible of the favour.

Ran. Nay, you may, I assure you ; for there is but one woman of virtue, besides yourself, I would stay with ten minutes (and I have not known her above these twelve hours ;) the insipidity, or the rancour of their discourse is insufferable——'Sdeath ! I had rather take the air with my grandmother.

Cla. Ha, ha, ha ! the ladies are highly obliged to you, I vow.

Ran. I tell you what ; the lady I speak of was obliged to me, and the generous girl is ready to own it.

Cla. And, pray, when was it you did virtue this considerable service ?

Ran. But this last night, the devil fetch me! A romantic whim of mine conveyed me into her chamber, where I found her, young and beautiful, alone at midnight, dress'd like a soft Adonis; her lovely hair all loose about her shoulders——

Cla. In boy's clothes! this is worth attending to.

[*Aside.*

Ran. Gad, I no more suspected her being a woman, than I did your being my cater-cousin.

Cla. How did you discover it at last?

Ran. Why, faith, she very modestly dropt me a hint of it herself.

Cla. Herself! If this should be Jacintha! [*Aside.*

Ran. Ay, 'forgad, did she; which I imagined a good sign at midnight, ay, cousin! So I e'en invented a long story of a passion I had for her, though I had never seen her before—you know my old way;—and said so many such tender things——

Cla. As you said to me just now.

Ran. Phol quite in another style, I assure you. It was midnight, and I was in a right cue.

Cla. Well! And what did she answer to all these protestations?

Ran. Why, instead of running into my arms at once, as I expected——

Cla. To be sure.

Ran. 'Gad, like a free-hearted, honest girl, she frankly told me she liked another better than she liked me; that I had something in my face that shewed I was a gentleman; and she would e'en trust herself

with me, if I would give her my word I would convey her to her spark.

Cla. Oh, brave! and how did you bear this?

Ran. Why, curse me, if I am ever angry with a woman for not having a passion for me.

Cla. *No!*

Ran. *Never.* I only hate your sex's vain pretence of having no passion at all. Gad, I lov'd the good-natured girl for it; took her at her word, stole her out of the window, and this morning made a very honest fellow happy in the possession of her.

Cla. And her name is Jacintha.

Ran. Ha!

Cla. Your amours are no secrets, sir. You see, you might as well have told me all the whole of last night's adventure; for you find I know.

Ran. All! Why, what do you know?

Cla. Nay, nothing, I only know that a gentleman's hat cannot be dropt in a lady's chamber——

Ran. The devil!

Cla. But a husband is such an odd, impertinent, awkward creature, that he will be stumbling over it.

Ran. Here hath been fine work. [*Aside.*] But how, in the name of wonder, should you know all this?

Cla. By being in the same house.

Ran. In the same house!

Cla. Ay, in the same house, a witness of the confusion you have made.

Ran. Frankly's Clarinda, by all that's fortunate! It must be so! [*Aside.*]

Cla. And let me tell you, sir, that even the dull, low-spirited diversions you ridicule in us tame creatures, are preferable to the romantic exploits that only wine can raise you to.

Ran. Yes, cousin : but I'll be even with you.

[*Aside.*

Cla. If you reflect, cousin, you will find a great deal of wit in shocking a lady's modesty, disturbing her quiet, tainting her reputation, and ruining the peace of a whole family.

Ran. To be sure.

Cla. These are the high-mettled pleasures of you men of spirit, that the insipidity of the virtuous can never arrive at. And can you in reality think your Burgundy, and your Bacchus, your Venus, and your Loves, an excuse for all this? Fie, cousin, fie!

Ran. No, cousin.

Cla. What, dumb! I am glad you have modesty enough left not to go about to excuse yourself.

Ran. It is as you say; when we are sober and reflect but ever so little on the follies we commit, we are ashamed and sorry; and yet the very next minute we run again into the same absurdities.

Cla. What! moralizing, cousin! ha, ha, ha!

Ran. What you know is not half, not a hundredth part of the mischief of my last night's frolic; and yet the very next petticoat I saw this morning I must follow it, and be damn'd to me; though, for aught I know, poor Frankly's life may depend upon it.

Cla. Whose life, sir?

Ran. And here do I stand prating to you now.

Cla. Pray, good cousin, explain yourself.

Ran. Good cousin! She has it. [*Aside.*] Why, whilst I was making off with the wench, Bellamy and he were quarrelling about her; and though Jacintha and I made all the haste we could, we did not get to them before——

Cla. Before what? I'm frighten'd out of my wits!

Ran. Not that Frankly cared three half-pence for the girl.

Cla. But there was no mischief done, I hope?

Ran. Pho! a slight scratch; nothing at all, as the surgeon said: though he was but a queer looking son of a bitch of a surgeon, neither.

Cla. Good God! why, he should have the best that can be found in London.

Ran. Ay, indeed, so he should; that was what I was going for when I saw you. [*Sits down.*] They are all at Jack Meggot's hard by, and you will keep me here.

Cla. I keep you here! For Heaven's sake be gone.

Ran. Your tea is a damn'd while a coming.

Cla. You shall have no tea now, I assure you.

Ran. Nay! one dish.

Cla. No, positively you shall not stay.

Ran. Your commands are absolute, madam.

[*Going.*]

Cla. Then Frankly is true, and I only am to blame.

Ran. [*Returns.*] But I beg ten thousand pardons, cousin, that I should forget——

Cla. Forget what!

Ran. Forget to salute you.

Cla. Pshaw! how can you trifle at such a time as this?

Ran. A trifle! wrong not your beauty.

Cla. Lord, how teasing you are. There.

Ran. [*Kisses her.*] Poor thing; how uneasy she is. Nay, no ceremony, you shall not stir a step with me.

Cla. I do not intend it. This is downright provoking. [*Exit Ranger.*] Who's there?

Enter Landlady.

Land. Madam, did your ladyship call?

Cla. Does one Mr. Meggot live in this neighbourhood?

Land. Yes, madam, a fine gentleman, and keeps a noble house, and a world of company.

Cla. Very well; I don't want his history. I wonder my servants are not come yet.

Land. Lack-a-day, madam, they are all below.

Cla. Send up one then with a card to me. I must know the truth of this immediately. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT V. SCENE I.

A Room in Mr. STRICTLAND's House. Mr. and Mrs. STRICTLAND discovered; she weeping, and he writing.

Mrs. Strickland.

HEIGH ho!

Strick. What can possibly be the occasion of that sigh, madam? you have yourself agreed to a maintenance, and a maintenance no dutchess need be ashamed of.

Mrs. Str. But the extremities of provocation that drove me to that agreement——

Strick. Were the effect of your own follies. Why do you disturb me? [Writes on.]

Mrs. Str. I would not willingly give you a moment's uneasiness; I but desire a fair and equal hearing: and if I satisfy you not in every point, then abandon me, discard me to the world, and its malicious tongues.

Strick. What was it you said? Damn this pen.

Mrs. Str. I say, Mr. Strickland, I would only——

Strick. You would only——You would only repeat what you have been saying this hour, I am innocent; and when I shewed you the letter I had taken from your maid, what was then your poor evasion, but that it was to Clarinda, and you were innocent.

Mrs. Str. Heaven knows, I am innocent.

Stria. But I know your Clarinda, your woman of honour, is your blind, your cover, your——But why do I distract myself about a woman I have no longer any concern with? Here, madam, is your fate. A letter to your brother in the country.

Mrs. Str. Sir——

Stria. I have told him what a sister he has to receive, and how to bid her welcome.

Mrs. Str. Then my ruin is complete. My brother!

Stria. I must vindicate my own honour, else what will the world say?

Mrs. Str. That brother was my only hope, my only ground of patience. In his retirement I hoped my name might have been safe, and slept, till by some happy means you might at length have known me innocent, and pitied me.

Stria. Retirement! prettysoul! no, no; that face was never made for retirement; it is another sort of retiring you are fittest for. Ha! hark! What's that? [*A knocking at the door.*] Two gentle taps—and why but two! was that the signal, madam? Stir not, on your life.

Mrs. Str. Give me resolution, Heaven, to bear this usage, and keep it secret from the world. [*Aside.*

Stria. I will have no signs, no items, no hem to tell him I am here. Ha! another tap. The gentleman is in haste, I find. [*Opens the door, and enter Tester.*] Tester! Why did you not come in, rascal? [*Beats him.*] All vexations meet to cross me.

Test. Lard, sir! what do you strike me for? my

mistress ordered me never to come in where she was without first knocking at the door.

Strick. Oh, cunning devil! Tester is too honest to be trusted.

Mrs. Str. Unhappy man; will nothing undeceive him? [*Aside*]

Test. Sir, here is a letter.

Strick. To my wife?

Test. No, sir, to you. The servant waits below.

Strick. Art sure it is a servant?

Test. Sir! [*Staring.*] it is Mr. Buckle, sir.

Strick. I am mad: I know not what to say, or do, or think. But let's read: [*Reads to himself.*]

"Sir, we cannot bear to reflect that Mrs. Strickland may possibly be ruined in your esteem, and in the voice of the world, only by the confusion which our affairs have made in your family, without offering all within our power to clear the misunderstanding between you. If you will give yourself the trouble but to step to Mr. Meggot's, where all parties will be, we doubt not but we can entirely satisfy your most flagrant suspicions, to the honour of Mrs. Strickland, and the quiet of your lives.

JACINTHA, JOHN BELLAMY."

Hey! Here is the whole gang witnessing for one another. They think I am an ass, and will be led by the nose to believe every thing. Call me a chair. [*Exit Tester.*] Yes, I will go to this rendezvous of enemies—I will—and find out all her plots, her arti-

Luc. fices and contrivances: it will clear my conduct to her brother, and all her friends.

[Exit Mr. Strickland.

Mrs. Str. Gone so abruptly! What can that letter be about? no matter; there is no way left to make us easy but by my disgrace, and I must learn to suffer; time and innocence will teach me to bear it patiently.

Enter LUCETTA.

Luc. Mrs. Bellamy, madam, (for my young lady is married) begs you would follow Mr. Strickland to Mr. Meggot's; she makes no doubt but she shall be able to make you and my master easy.

Mrs. Str. But how came she to know any thing of the matter?

Luc. I have been with them, madam; I could not bear to see so good a lady ill-treated.

Mrs. Str. I am indeed, Lucetta, ill-treated: but I hope this day will be the last of it.

Luc. Madam Clarinda and Mr. Frankly will be there: and the young gentleman, madam, who was with you in this room last night.

Mrs. Str. Ha! if he is there, there may be hopes; and it is worth the trying.

Luc. Dear lady, let me call a chair.

Mrs. Str. I go with you. I cannot be more wretched than I am.

[Exeunt.

SCENE II.

A Room in J. MEGGOT's House. Enter FRANKLY, RANGER, BELLAMY, JACINTHA, and J. MEGGOT.

Fran. Oh, Ranger, this is news indeed! your cousin, and a lady of such fortune!

Ran. I have done the business for you: I tell you she's your own. She loves you.

Fran. *You make my heart dance with joy.* "Words are too faint to tell the joy I feel."

Ran. I have put that heart of hers into such a flutter, that I'll lay a hundred guineas, with the assistance which this lady has promised me, I fix her yours directly.

Jac. Ay, ay, Mr. Frankly, we have a design upon her which cannot fail. But you must obey orders.

Fran. Most willingly: but remember, dear lady, I have more than life at stake.

Jac. Away then into the next room; for she is this instant coming hither.

Fran. Hither! you surprise me more and more.

Jac. Here is a message from her, by which she desires leave to wait on me this afternoon.

Ran. Only for the chance of seeing you here, I assure ye.

Fran. Let me hug thee; though I know not how to believe it.

Ran. Psha! pr'ythee don't stifle me! It is a busy day, a very busy day.

J. Meg. Thou art the most unaccountable creature in life.

Ren. But the most lucky one, Jack, if I succeed for Frankly as I have for Bellamy, and my heart whispers me I shall. Come in, most noble Mr. Buckle : and what have you to propose ?

Enter BUCKLE.

Buc. A lady, madam, in a chair, says her name is Clarinda.

Jac. Desire her to walk up.

Bel. How could you let her wait ? [*Exit Buckle,* You must excuse him, madam ; Buckle is a true bachelor's servant, and knows no manners.

Jac. Away, away, Mr. Frankly, and stay till I call you. A rap with my fan shall be the signal. [*Exit Frankly.*] We make very free with your house, Mr. Meggot.

J. Meg. Oh, you could not oblige me more.

Enter CLARINDA.

Cla. Dear Mrs. Bellamy, pity my confusion. I am to wish you joy and ask you pardon all in a breath. I know not what to say ; I am quite asham'd of my last night's behaviour.

Jac. Come, come, Clarinda, it is all well ; all is over and forgot. Mr. Bellamy—— [*Salute.*

Cla. I wish yon joy, sir, with all my heart, and should have been very sorry if any folly of mine had prevented it.

Bel. Madam, I am oblig'd to you.

Cla. I see nothing of Mr. Frankly! my mind mis-gives me. [*Aside.*

Ran. And so, you came hither purely out of friendship, good-nature, and humility.

Cla. Purely.

Ran. To confess your offences, to beg pardon, and to make reparation.

Cla. Purely. Is this any thing so extraordinary?

J. Meg. The most so of any thing in life, I think.

Ran. A very whimsical business for so fine a lady, and an errand you seldom went on before, I fancy, my dear cousin.

Jac. Never, I dare swear, if I may judge by the awkward concern she shews in delivering it.

Cla. Concern! Lard, well, I protest, you are all exceeding pretty company! Being settled for life, *Jacintha*, gives an ease to the mind that brightens conversation strangely,

Jac. I am sorry, with all my heart, you are not in the same condition; for as you are, my dear, you are horridly *chagriné*.

Ran. But with a little of our help, madam, the lady may recover, and be very good company.

Cla. Hum! What does he mean, Mr. Bellamy?

Bel. Ask him, madam.

Cla. Indeed I shall not give myself the trouble.

Jac. Then you know what he means.

Cla. Something impertinent, I suppose, not worth explaining.

Jac. It is something you won't let him explain, I find.

Enter BUCKLE, and whispers MEGGOT.

J. Meg. Very well. Desire him to walk into the parlour. Madam, the gentleman is below.

Jac. Then every one to your posts. You know your cues.

Ran. I warrant ye. *[Exeunt Gentlemen.]*

Cla. All gone! I am glad of it, for I want to speak to you.

Jac. And I, my dear Clarinda, have something which I do not know how to tell you: but it must be known sooner or latter.

Cla. What's the matter?

Jac. Poor Mr. Frankly——

Cla. You fright me out of my senses!

Jac. Has no wounds but what you can cure. Ha, ha, ha!

Cla. Psha! I am angry.

Jac. Psha! You are pleased; and will be more so, when I tell you, this man, whom fortune has thrown in your way, is, in rank and temper, the man in the world who suits you best for a husband.

Cla. Husband! I say, husband, indeed! Where will this end? *[Aside.]*

Jac. His very soul is yours, and he only waits an opportunity of telling you so. He is in the next room. Shall I call him in?

Cla. My dear girl, hold!

Jac. How foolish is this coyness now, Clarinda! If the men were here indeed, something might be said——And so, Mr. Frankly——

Cla. How can you be so teasing?

Jac. Nay, I am in downright earnest: and, to shew how particular I have been in my inquiries, “though
“ I know you have a spirit above regarding the mo-
“ dish, paltry way of a Smithfield bargain”——his fortune——

Cla. I don’t care what his fortune is.

Jac. Don’t you so? Then you are farther gone than I thought you were.

Cla. No, Psha! pr’ythee, I dont mean so neither..

Jac. I don’t care what you mean: but you won’t like him the worse, I hope, for having a fortune superior to your own. Now shall I call him in?

Cla. Pho, dear girl——Some other time.

Jac. [*Raps with her fan.*] That’s the signal, and here he is. You shall not stir: I positively will leave you together. [Exit Jacintha.

Cla. I tremble all over.

Enter FRANKLY.

Fran. Pardon this freedom, madam: but I hope our having so luckily met with a common friend in Mrs. Bellamy——

Cla. Sir!

Fran. Makes any farther apology for my behaviour last night absolutely unnecessary.

Cla. So far, Mr. Frankly, that I think the apology

should be rather on my side, for the impertinent bustle I made about her.

Fran. This behaviour gives me hopes, madam : pardon the construction—but from the little bustle you made about the lady, may I not hope you was not quite indifferent about the gentleman ?

Cla. Have a care of being too sanguine in your hopes: might not a love of power, or the satisfaction of shewing that power, or the dear pleasure of abusing that power ; might not these have been foundation enough for more than what I did ?

Fran. Charming woman! With most of your sex, I grant, they might, but not with you. Whatever power your beauty gives, your good-nature will allow you no other use of it than to oblige.

Cla. This is the height of compliment, Mr. Frankly.

Fran. Not in my opinion, I assure you, madam; and I am now going to put it to the trial.

Cla. What is he going to say now ? [*Aside.*

Fran. What is it that ails me, that I cannot speak ? Psha ! he here ! [*Aside.*

Enter RANGER.

Interrupted ! impertinent !

Ran. There is no sight so ridiculous as a pair of your true lovers. Here are you two now, bowing and cringing, and keeping a passion secret from one another, that is no secret to all the house beside, And

if you don't make the matter up immediately, it will be all over the town within these two hours.

Cla. What do you mean?

Fran. Ranger——

Ran. Do you be quiet, can't ye? [*Aside.*] But it is over, I suppose, cousin, and you have given him your consent.

Cla. Sir, the liberties you are pleas'd to take with me——

Ran. Oh! in your airs still, are you? Why then, Mr. Frankly, there is a certain letter of yours, sir, to this lady.——

Cla. A letter to me!

Ran. Ay! to you, madam.

Fran. Ha! what of that letter?

Ran. It is only fallen into Mr. Strickland's hands, that is all: and he has read it.

Fran. Read it!

Ran. Ay, read it to all his family at home, and to all the company below: and if some stop be not put to it, it will be read in all the coffee-houses in town.

Fran. A stop! this sword shall put a stop to it, or I will perish in the attempt.

Ran. But will that sword put a stop to the talk of the town?—Only make it talk the faster, take my word for it.

Cla. This is all a trick.

Ran. A trick! Is it so? you shall soon see that, my fine cousin.

[*Exit* Ranger.]

Fran. It is but too true, I fear. There is such a

letter, which I gave Lucetta. Can you forgive me ? Was I much to blame, when I could neither see nor hear of you ?

Cla. [*Tenderly.*] You give yourself, Mr. Frankly, a thousand more uneasinesses than you need about me.

Fran. If this uneasiness but convinces you how much I love you—Interrupted again !

Cla. This is downright malice. [*Aside.*

Enter RANGER, followed by JACINTHA, Mr. STRICTLAND, BELLAMY, and MEGGOT.

Ran. Enter, enter, gentlemen and lady. Now you shall see whether this is a trick or no.

Cla. Mr. Strictland here ! What is all this ?

Jac. Do not be uneasy, my dear ; we will explain it to you.

Fran. I cannot bear this trifling, Ranger, when my heart is on the rack.

Ran. Come this way then, and learn.

[*Jacintha, Clarinda, Frankly and Ranger retire.*

[*Mr. Strictland, Bellamy, and Meggot advance.*

Strict. Why, I know not well what to say. This has a face. This letter may as well agree with Clarinda, as with my wife, as you have told the story ; and Lucetta explain'd it so ; but she, for a sixpenny piece, would have constru'd it the other way.

J. Meg. But, sir, if we produce this Mr. Frankly to you, and he owns himself the author of this letter—

Bel. And if Clarinda likewise be brought before

your face to encourage his addresses, there can be no farther room for doubt.

Strict. No. Let that appear, and I shall, I think I shall, be satisfied—But yet it cannot be——

Bel. Why not? Hear me, sir. *[They talk.]*

[Jacintha, Clarinda, Frankly, and Ranger advance.]

Jac. In short, Clarinda, unless the affair is made up directly, a separation, with all the obloquy on her side, must be the consequence.

Cla. Poor Mrs. Strickland! I pity her: but for him, he deserves all he feels, were it ten times what it is.

Jac. It is for her sake only, that we beg of you both to bear his impertinence.

Cla. With all my heart. You will do what you please with me.

Fran. Generous creature!

Strict. Ha! here she is, and with her the very man I saw deliver the letter to Lucetta. I do begin to fear I have made myself a fool. Now for the proof. Here is a letter, sir, which has given me great disturbance, and these gentlemen assure me it was writ by you.

Fran. That letter, sir, upon my honour, I left this morning with Lucetta, for this lady.

Strict. For that lady! and Frankly, the name at the bottom, is not feign'd, but your real name?

Fran. Frankly is my name.

Strict. I see, I feel myself ridiculous.

Jac. Now, Mr. Strickland, I hope——

J. Meg. Ay, ay; a clear case.

Striſt. I am ſatisfied, and will go this inſtant to Mrs. Striſtland.

Ran. Why then the devil fetch me if this would ſatisfy me.

Striſt. What's that?

Ran. Nay, nothing; it is no affair of mine.

Bel. What do you mean, Ranger?

Striſt. Ay, what do you mean? I will know before I ſtir.

Ran. With all my heart, ſir. Cannot you ſee that all this may be a concerted matter between them?

Fran. Ranger, you know I can reſent.

Striſt. Go on; I will defend you, let who will reſent it.

Ran. Why then, ſir, I declare myſelf your friend: and were I as you, nothing but their immediate marriage ſhould convince me.

Striſt. Sir, you're right, and are my friend indeed. Give me your hand.

Ran. Nay, were I to hear her ſay, I, Clarinda, take thee, Charles, I would not believe them, 'till I ſaw them a-bed together. Now reſent it as you will.

Striſt. Ay, ſir, as you will: but nothing leſs ſhall convince me; and ſo, my fine lady, if you are in earneſt.—

Cla. Sure, Mr. Striſtland.—

Striſt. Nay, no flouncing; you cannot eſcape.

Ran. Why, Frankly, haſt no ſoul?

Fran. I pity her confuſion.

Ran. Pity her confusion !—the man's a fool—Here, take her hand.

Fran. Thus, on my knees, then let me ravish, with your hand, your heart.

Cla. Ravish it you cannot ; for it is with all my heart I give it you.

Strict. I am satisfied.

Cla. And so am I, now it is once over.

Ran. And so am I, my dainty cousin ; and I wish you joy of a man your whole sex would go to cuffs for, if they knew him but half so well as I do—Hal she's here ; this is more than I bargain'd for. [*Aside.*]

JACINTHA leads in Mrs. STRICTLAND.

Strict. [*Embracing Mrs. Strictland.*] Madam, reproach me not with my folly, and you shall never hear of it again.

Mrs. Str. Reproach you ! no ! if ever you hear the least reflection pass my lips, forsake me in that instant ; or, what would yet be worse, suspect again.

Strict. It is enough. I am asham'd to talk to thee. This letter, which I wrote to your brother, thus I tear in pieces, and with it part for ever with my jealousy.

Mrs. Str. This is a joy indeed ! as great as unexpected. Yet there is one thing wanting, to make it lasting.

Ran. What the devil is coming now ? [*Aside.*]

Mrs. Str. Be assur'd, every other suspicion of me was as unjust as your last : though, perhaps, you had more foundations for your fears.

Ran. She won't tell, sure, for her own sake.

[*Aside.*

Mrs. Str. All must be clear'd before my heart will be at ease.

Ran. It looks plaguy like it, though ! [*Aside.*

Strick. What mean you ? I am all attention.

Mrs. Str. There was a man, as you suspected, in my chamber last night.

Strick. Ha ! take care, I shall relapse.

Mrs. Str. That gentleman was he——

Ran. Here is a devil for you ! [*Aside.*

Mrs. Str. Let him explain the rest.

Ran. A frolic, a mere frolic, on my life.

Strick. A frolic ! Zounds ! [*They interpose.*

Ran. Nay, don't let us quarrel the very moment you declar'd yourself my friend. There was no harm done, I promise you. Nay, never frown. After I have told my story, any satisfaction you are pleas'd to ask, I shall be ready to give.

Strick. Be quick then, and ease me of my pain.

Ran. Why then, as I was strolling about last night upon the look-out, I must confess chance, and chance only, convey'd me to your house ; where I espied a ladder of ropes most invitingly fasten'd to the window——

Jac. Which ladder I had fasten'd for my escape.

Striff. Proceed.

Ran. Up mounted I, and up I should have gone, if it had been in the garret; *it's all one to Ranger.* I open'd one door, then another, and, to my great surprise, the whole house was silent; at last, I stole into a room where this lady was undressing.

Striff. 'Sdeath and the devil! you did not dare sure——

Ran. I don't know whether I had dared, or no, if I had not heard the maid say something of her master's being jealous. Oh, damn me, thought I, then the work is half done to my hands.

Jac. Do you mind that, Mr. Strickland?

Striff. I do——I do most feelingly.

Ran. The maid grew saucy, and most conveniently to my wishes, was turn'd out of the room; and if you had not had the best wife in the world——

Striff. 'Ounds, sir, but what right have you——

Ran. What right, sir? if you will be jealous of your wife without a cause; if you will be out at that time of night, when you might have been so much better employ'd at home; we young fellows think we have a right——

Striff. No joking, I beseech you; you know not what I feel.

Ran. Then seriously, I was mad, or drunk enough, call it which you will, to be very rude to this lady, for which I ask both her pardon and yours. I am an odd sort of a fellow, perhaps; but I am

above telling you or any man a lie, damn me, if I am not.

Striſt. I must, I cannot but believe you; and for the future, madam, you shall find a heart ready to love and trust you. No tears, I beg; I cannot bear them.

Mrs. Str. I cannot speak, and yet there is a favour, sir——

Striſt. I understand you; and, as proof of the sincerity with which I speak, I beg it as a favour, of this lady in particular, [*To Clarinda*] and of all the company in general, to return to my house immediately, where every thing, Mr. Bellamy, shall be settled to your entire satisfaction. No thanks, I have not deserv'd them.

J. Meg. I beg your pardon, sir, the fiddles are ready; Mrs. Bellamy has promis'd me her hand, and I won't part with one of you till midnight; and if you are as well satisfied as you pretend to be, let our friend Rattle here begin the ball with Mrs. Striſtland; for he seems to be the hero of the day.

Striſt. As you and the company please.

Ran. Why, this is honest; continue but in this humour, and faith, sir, you may trust me to run about your house like a spaniel. I cannot sufficiently admire at the whimsicalness of my good fortune, in being so instrumental to this general happiness. Bellamy, Frankly, I wish you joy with all my heart, though I had rather you should be married than I,

for all that. Never did matrimony appear to me with a smile upon her face till this instant.

*Sure joys for ever wait each happy pair,
When sense the man, and virtue crowns the fair,
And kind compliance proves their mutual care.*

A dance. Exit omnes.
